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# THE RUSSIAN REVIEW



*An American Journal  
Devoted to Russia  
Past and Present*

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Owing to circumstances beyond the Editors' control, the article on Russian Music by S. Koussevitsky, "The Legacy of Kiev" by S. H. Cross, and "The St. Petersburg Renaissance" by M. Dobujinsky could not appear in the present issue, but will be published in later issues of the Review.

# THE RUSSIAN REVIEW

An American Journal Devoted to Russia  
Past and Present

Vol. I

APRIL 1942

No. 2

\* \* \*

The Soviet-German War: Results and Prospects, <i>William Henry Chamberlin</i> .....	3
The Eastward Course of Soviet Industry and the War, <i>Mose L. Harvey and Melville J. Ruggles</i> .....	10
The Religious Sources of Russian Populism, <i>G. P. Fedotov</i> .....	27
The Angel, a Poem by M. Lermontov (translated by Lascelle de Basily) .....	39
The Lesson of Port Arthur, <i>Alexis R. Wiren</i> .....	40
John B. Turchin: Russian General in the American Civil War, <i>Albert Parry</i> .....	44
Twenty-Five Years of Russian Emigré Literature, <i>Helen Iswolsky</i>	61
Music in Soviet Russia, <i>Henry Cowell</i> .....	74
D. S. Merezhkovsky, 1865-1941, <i>Waclaw Lednicki</i> .....	80
The Russian Ambassador in France, 1789-1792, <i>Anatole G. Mazour</i>	86

## BOOK REVIEWS

Outlines of Russian Culture, by Paul Miliukov, <i>William Henry Chamberlin</i> .....	94
<i>Petr I: Materiialy dlya biografii</i> [Peter I: Biographical Materials] by M. M. Bogoslovsky, <i>Michael Karpovich</i> .....	95
The Favourites of Catherine the Great, by Alexander Polovtsoff, <i>Douglas K. Reading</i> .....	96
<i>Tsarstvovanie imperatora Nikolaya II</i> [The Reign of Emperor Nicholas II], by S. S. Oldenburg, <i>A. M. Nikholaieff</i> .....	97
Northeastern Asia: A Selected Bibliography, by Robert J. Kerner, <i>Michael Karpovich</i> .....	99
Memoirs, by Jeremiah Curtin, <i>Alexander Tarsaidzé</i> .....	100
Dostoevski: The Making of a Novelist, by Ernest J. Simmons, <i>Monroe C. Beardsley</i> .....	100
<i>Stil Shchedrina</i> [Shchedrin's Style], by Ya. E. Elsberg, <i>Nikander Strelsky</i> .....	102

(Continued on page II)

American Opinion of Soviet Russia, by Meno Lovenstein, <i>Nicholas Wreden</i> .....	103
Mission to Moscow, by Joseph E. Davies, <i>Michael T. Florinsky</i> .....	104
Men and Politics, by Louis Fischer; The Kremlin and the People by Walter Duranty, <i>Manya Gordon</i> .....	106
The Soviet Experiment, by Harry Best; Soviet Russia: Anatomy of a Social History, by E. Strauss, <i>N. S. Timasheff</i> .....	108
Tomorrow Will Come, by E. M. Almedingen, <i>Sonia Tomara</i> .....	109
Arrest and Exile: The True Story of an American Woman in Poland and Siberia, 1940-41, by Lillian T. Mowrer, <i>Arthur Prudden Coleman</i> .....	110
<i>Novyi Zhurnal</i> [The New Review, a Russian Quarterly] Vol. I, No. 1, New York, 1942; The Slavonic Year-Book (American Series, 1), 1941, <i>D. S. von Mohrenschildt</i> .....	111
<i>Rossiisko - Amerikanskaya Kompaniya</i> [The Russian - American Company] by S. B. Okun', <i>Anatole G. Mazour</i> .....	114
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>	
Books and Articles on Russia published in 1941, <i>Nikander Strelsky</i>	116

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All dates pertaining to Russia prior to the introduction of the new style (Gregorian Calendar) on February 1, 1918, are according to the old style. The emblem on the cover of "The Russian Review" is an original design by M. V. Dobujinsky, representing "Alkonost," a mythical figure, half-woman, half-bird, popular in Russian folk-lore.

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# The Soviet-German War: Results and Prospects

BY WILLIAM HENRY CHAMBERLIN

THE Soviet-German War has represented the greatest clash of modern mechanized forces in all history. Whereas most of the other campaigns in the Second World War, apart from the indecisive swaying backward and forward of the front in Libya, have ended in overwhelming victory for the stronger side, this conflict between two totalitarian mastodon states has still not led to a decisive conclusion.

During the first five months of the war the German tradition of invincibility in land fighting was pretty well sustained. There were stubborn Soviet defensive actions, in the Smolensk area, in the neighborhood of Kiev, on the approaches to Leningrad and Odessa. There were a few Soviet counter-attacks. But the general movement of the line of the front was eastward. At the height of the German success, toward the end of November, about 500,000 square miles of Soviet territory, including some of the most populous and industrialized regions of the country, had been occupied, or at least overrun. The three largest cities of Ukraina, Kiev, Odessa, and Kharkov, were in German hands. The rich iron deposits of Krivoi Rog, the manganese of Nikopol, much of the coal of the Donetz Basin had been lost. Between one-third and one-half of Soviet industry had been dislocated; some plants were doubtless evacuated to the interior, but others were destroyed and some fell into the hands of the invaders. The Germans were threatening the two largest cities of the Soviet Union, Moscow and Leningrad, and the immensely valuable oil wells of the Caucasus.

The recapture by the Soviet troops of Rostov, late in November, was the first convincing sign of a turn in the tide. During the first half of December the initiative definitely passed to the Soviet side. The threat to Moscow was relieved, the encirclement of Tula was broken. And up to the time of writing (March 10) the Russians retained the initiative. Several important towns, Kalinin (Tver), Kaluga, Mozhaishk, Kertch, at the eastern extremity of the Crimea, were

retaken. There were substantial infiltrations of Soviet troops into the German lines in the northwestern and central sectors.

The front commenced to present a peculiar appearance, with Soviet spearheads reported within fifty miles of Smolensk and a Soviet wedge apparently driven into the German Ukrainian lines through Lozovaya, while the Germans clung stubbornly to a number of anchor towns, the impending capture of which was repeatedly announced without being realized. Among such towns were Kharkov, Kursk, Orel, Bryansk, Vyazma, and Taganrog, in the near vicinity of Rostov.

It is difficult to write with certainty about the strategic results of this gigantic struggle, which was a war of propaganda as well as of arms. At the time of the first great drive for Moscow in October, 1941, the Germans grossly exaggerated the dimensions of their success, announcing that the Russian armies were completely destroyed, that Russia would never rise again. A similar trend toward exaggeration is visible in some of the Soviet descriptions of the alleged rout and destruction of large German forces.

There has been little convincing evidence of demoralization in the German armies. There have been no mass surrenders, and the ability of the Germans to hold towns and railway sectors deep in Russian territory seems to indicate that the Germans were able to offer stubborn and, in the main, successful resistance, even in the rigors of the unaccustomed Russian winter.

It is perhaps significant that the deepest Russian penetrations into the German lines have been in the Northwest, while the Germans have held most strongly on the southern sectors of the front. This may be partly due to the more severe winter of northern Russia, for which the Russians were both better acclimatized and more adequately clothed. But it may also indicate the hopes of the two High Commands as to the direction of bigger offensive operations when the hardening of the ground after the spring thaw will make possible the resumption of fighting on a larger scale.

The Russians may be hoping for a decisive break-through in the North which would make possible the invasion of Finland and perhaps a joining up with a British expeditionary force in Norway. It is probable that Germany's plans for the spring include a drive against the Caucasus, which may well be part of a vast thrust against the British positions in the Near East and may be combined with attacks on Turkey and on Egypt.

Both totalitarian systems, the Nazi and the Communist, have proved their military efficiency and their political strength in this

grim ordeal, with its enormous employment of tanks and airplanes. The Soviet armies sustained a terrific pounding during the first five months of the war, suffered great losses, and were forced back many hundreds of miles without losing morale, cohesion, or the ability to strike back hard and effectively when the opportunity presented itself.

We can only speculate as to the causes of the turn in the tide toward the end of November. It seems likely that the Germans had outrun effective lines of supply and communication and that the arrival of fresh aid and mechanized units from the Soviet Far Eastern Army helped to tip the balance. This second factor would also explain Stalin's disinclination to take advantage of Japan's preoccupation with campaigns in the South Pacific. The Russian winter was a climatic factor that strongly favored Soviet forces; it has been reported that German synthetic rubber and gasoline do not stand up well under conditions of extreme cold; and there has been little evidence of extensive German air activity during the winter months.

If the Soviets passed the test of the repeated German offensives, the Germans did not, as some observers had hoped, suffer the fate of Napoleon and collapse completely in the snows of Russia. Indeed the whole character of Hitler's campaign in Russia has been very different from Napoleon's. The French conqueror marched into a Russia that then did not possess a mile of railway, that had few good roads or large towns, carried out a narrow ribbon-like advance to Moscow, and saw his *Grande Armée* disintegrate helplessly when the occupation of Moscow failed to yield decisive political or military results and the retreat was ordered.

The Germans have invaded Russia on a tremendously wide front from the Arctic Ocean to the Black Sea. They were able to utilize a network of railways, to quarter their troops in large towns. The issue of the war still hangs in the balance and will be determined largely by the numbers of new reserves that can be thrown into the spring offensive and by the quantity and quality of matériel of which the two sides will dispose.

Among the factors that have made for the tenacity and relative success of the Soviet resistance the following are probably the most important:

(1) The Soviet youth, like the German youth under Hitler, has been brought up under a régime of intensive indoctrination with the ideas of the ruling group and of Spartan physical training. The result, in each case, has been a large reserve of good natural soldiers,

devoted to the régime and capable of efficient handling of modern weapons.

(2) Russian national feeling has been aroused by the German invasion. It is significant that most of the official Soviet propaganda since the beginning of the war has been along nationalist lines and has invoked the memory of such famous Tsarist Generals as Suvorov and Kutuzov.

(3) While the Soviet system has not made for individual comfort or for a high standard of living in time of peace, it is well adapted to the needs of war. The total mobilization of manpower and material resources which is the ideal of every wartime government is implicit in the Soviet economy. The Soviet Government has no need to concern itself about businessmen who wish to make profits as usual, about labor unions which wish to push up wages, about consumers who complain if their standard of living is cut too sharply.

The last private businessman was long ago liquidated. The trade-unions are completely dominated by the ruling Communist Party. There is no articulate public opinion except what the Government manufactures for its own purposes. Massive destruction in the path of an invading enemy is easier to carry out when no question of private ownership of the industrial plants and the farms is involved.

The Red Army has few links with the pre-war Russian Army. This is one reason why its leaders have never succumbed to the illusion that the methods which were effective under the conditions of 1914-1918 would be equally effective in the age of mass production of airplanes and tanks. For the first time Hitler encountered a military machine not as good as his own (for in that case the fighting would be in Germany, not in Russia), but able to put into the field a comparable number of tanks and airplanes.

(4) Russia's vast size, large population, and widely distributed natural resources are serious obstacles to conquest. Russia is two and a half times the size of the United States. It is about forty times the area of France. A German advance of two hundred miles into France was sufficient to sound the doom of French resistance. It meant the loss of Paris and of the principal centres of French industry. But the Germans, in places, pushed six or seven hundred miles into Soviet territory from their point of departure without being able to deal a decisive and crushing blow. There was still abundant space in which the Red Army could reform and counterattack. Much of the newer Soviet industry is located in the Ural region, beyond the range of even aerial attack.

It has been a familiar experience in Russian history that the shock of a great foreign war has been at once the precursor and the cause of sweeping internal changes. With the issue of the war still hanging in the balance, it is premature to predict what changes may follow the present conflict.

Two points may be significant in this connection. Soviet propaganda, not only during the war, but for several years previously, has been taking on a nationalist note that would have been sternly repressed in the first years of the Revolution. It may be that the war, like the Troubled Times, from which Russia was delivered under the leadership of Minin and Pozharsky, will be the prelude to a definite reassertion of the claims of Russian national patriotism.

A foreign observer who recently returned to America from the Soviet Union reports that after the beginning of the war there was a marked increase in attendance in the churches. While there has been no official modification of the anti-religious attitude of the Soviet Government, it may well be that Stalin has given instructions to relax pressure against religion during the war, in order to avoid any element of national division. How permanent this change may be, how lasting will be the effects of the religious revival that seems to have occurred, at least on a small scale, cannot be foreseen.

A quarter of a century has elapsed since the Tsarist régime fell on March 12, 1917. A whole generation has grown up, a generation reared in an atmosphere of swift change and of great physical hardship. Even for a people so tenacious, so tough in the will to survive, so resilient as the Russians have proved to be in many crises of their history, this twenty-five years has been an epoch of terrific strain and sacrifice.

Immediately after the three years of destructive war against the technically superior German forces of the First World War, came more than three years of Civil War, always the most cruel form of hostilities. While the loss of life in the battles of the Civil War was much less than was the case during the First World War, the casualties from famine, epidemics, and terror on both sides were appalling. The breakdown of the elementary conditions of civilized existence during the epoch of so-called War Communism exceeded anything that had been experienced in Europe since the Thirty Years' War.

After the period of reconstruction and respite under the New Economic Policy, between 1922 and 1929, a new severe ordeal developed with the First Five Year Plan. The modest standard of living was ruthlessly cut in order to promote the rapid development of the heavy industries, just as consumers' standards of living are being cut



in all the warring countries today to make possible the maximum output of war material. The hardships of the First Five Year Plan were aggravated because of the tremendous dislocation in the lives of the peasants, and in the agricultural output of the country, which was a consequence of the substitution of collective for individual farming.

After 1933 there was again a respite. The peasants had become resigned to the system of collective farming. Food products became more plentiful. People began to dress better and to enjoy more amusement. Stalin even gave out the official slogan that "life has become gay."

There was the interlude of the spectacular trials of prominent old Communists and of the merciless purges of the Party, of the Soviet administration, and of the Army and Navy. These developments brought death to thousands, banishment and disgrace to tens of thousands. But it seems that the masses of the Russian people were less stirred by this ruthless elimination of a certain group of the ruling party than was public opinion abroad. A new tightening of disciplinary measures, new privations appeared after the outbreak of the war in Europe, although Stalin at first contrived to remain aloof from the conflict.

A new epoch of tremendous trial and suffering set in for Russia when the full weight of the German military machine was hurled against the country on June 22, 1941. Any judgment on the permanent results of the Russian Revolution is necessarily dependent on the still uncertain outcome of this war, the greatest in Russia's history. Stalin as a dictator, the Soviet régime itself, might fall if the Axis offensives against Russia which may be expected in the future are successful. Should Russia hold out successfully and press home its offensive, it may emerge as the strongest power on the entire Eurasian continent, following a total defeat of Germany and Japan.

The Revolution has not proceeded along the lines which were desired by the Liberals and moderate Socialists who were in power during the turbulent eight months that elapsed between the fall of Tsarism and the second Revolution of November 7, 1917, which was carried out under the leadership of the Bolsheviki. The ideals of Western democracy and individual liberty were never realized in Russia under the Soviets. Indeed the control over every form of thought and expression was more complete, and the penalties imposed for "counterrevolution," a term which covered any form of political opposition, were more drastic than was the case under the old régime.

Pure communism, in the sense that everything was shared equally, was never achieved in Russia. At the present time, the spread in salaries, wages, and standards of living as between high Soviet officials and industrial executives, engineers, skilled and unskilled workers is not very different from what it would be under a so-called capitalist system. But there is a vital innovation in Russia, inasmuch as means of production are monopolized by the state. There can be no individual owners of factories and railways, shops, and mines. One could briefly summarize the Soviet economy by saying that everyone, in some form, is working for a single impersonal employer: the state.

There has also been a tremendous overturn in agriculture. The peasant has been practically divorced from ownership of the land. He has been given the status of a proletarian, working on collective farms which are so closely controlled and supervised by the state that they might fairly be considered state enterprises. Such sweeping changes were perhaps only possible because of the absence of a large propertied class in Russia. Even so, they were only put into operation at the cost of an immense amount of individual suffering and economic dislocation.

On the political side, the Soviet régime has remained true to Lenin's formula that there might be any number of parties in Russia—so long as the Communist Party was in power and the other parties were in jail. The Soviet Union was the pioneer in the one-party state. Russian Communists are not a political party, competing for power with other parties; but a ruling group with a monopoly of power.

The strength of this one-party state, with its totalitarian control of thought, its exclusive command of all resources of propaganda, and its unlimited control over the human and material resources of the country, has been proved both in Germany and in Russia. This strength is especially marked, for reasons which have already been outlined, in time of war.

One of Russia's greatest and most imaginative historians, Kluchevsky, has told the dramatic story of how the Russian State was forged under conditions of hardship and suffering that would be almost unimaginable to peoples who had escaped such ordeals as the constant struggle with Tartars, and Turks, and the heavy yoke of the medieval Russian serf system. Past and present trials have put much iron into the Russian character. It will all be needed for the trials of the not distant future.

# The Eastward Course of Soviet Industry and the War

BY MOSE L. HARVEY AND MELVILLE J. RUGGLES

## I

ON FEBRUARY 2 of this year, American and British newspapers carried a Reuters dispatch which announced that, according to "authoritative data," total Russian production in January 1942, was forty per cent greater than in June, 1940.<sup>1</sup>

This extremely optimistic view of the industrial situation of the Soviet Union, after months of harrowing and ground-losing warfare, is just one of many which have been expressed since the German assault on Russia began. Some writers have even gone so far as to state that not only have the Soviets' territorial losses up to the present not seriously affected the nation's economic strength, but that even if all of Russia west of the Urals should fall to Hitler, sufficient industrial and raw material resources would remain to make it possible for the Red Army to continue effective, large-scale warfare.

Thus, Charles E. Egan reported in the *New York Times* on September 7, 1941, that "Hidden behind the natural bastion of the Ural Mountains, Russia has an industrial and raw material supply source which can continue to supply the Soviet armies even if all of European Russia falls into the hands of the Nazis." Dr. George B. Cressey of Syracuse University, in a paper read before the Association of American Geographers on December 31, 1941, declared that "even if Vladivostok were to fall to the Japanese and Soviet Europe to Nazi Germany, the way to [Soviet] victory would still be clear."<sup>2</sup> And a London *Times* correspondent wrote on August 9, 1941, that during the past eight years Russian industry "went eastwards and became based chiefly on the ores of the Urals and the limitless coal of the Kuznetsk basin."

<sup>1</sup>*The New York Times*, February 2, 1942.

<sup>2</sup>*The Christian Science Monitor*, December 31, 1941.

As the hour approaches when the Nazi hordes are scheduled, according to Hitler, to renew their eastward drive, the question of whether or not optimism of this sort is justified becomes of paramount importance. Is it true that the vast expanses of eastern Russia have been so industrialized that the striking power of the Red Army can be effectively maintained despite the loss, or the severe damaging, of the three old industrial regions? Can the Russians yield even more territory, with a consequent loss of productive capacity, without suffering an almost fatal blow to their ability to prevent a constant decline in their war potential? Are the great new industrial developments beyond the Volga sufficient to enable the Soviet Union to keep the eastern front from becoming a mere "nuisance front" like the present Chinese front? Can Russia "carry on," so long as the trans-Volga territories are held, with nothing more than limited "supplementary supplies" from the United States and Britain? Can the American and British people safely assume that Russia can largely take care of herself regardless of "transitory territorial losses?" Can they afford to take the position that it will not be necessary for them to assume a large share in supplying the Russian millions with the tools necessary for modern war?

Although there are many uncertainties—even many complete mysteries—about Soviet economy, enough evidence seems to be available to justify a negative answer to each of these questions. Unless something little short of a miracle has taken place during recent months, the new industries of the East cannot possibly produce adequate equipment to enable the Red Army, if it is forced to rely primarily on them, to maintain its present fighting strength. If ever-increasing quantities of supplies of all descriptions are not poured in from the outside, Russia's military power inevitably must constantly and relentlessly decline.

This does not mean that no progress has been made during recent years in building up new industries in the Soviet East. Far from it. Since 1927 Soviet achievements in this sphere have been unquestionably great. In region after region, where a few short years ago there were only sleepy villages or arid wasteland, large and prosperous cities and impressive industrial establishments now exist. But great as progress has been, it still has not been enough to enable the East to support the military forces of the entire Russian nation. The embryo of a short time ago has grown into a mighty infant, but it still is only an infant. It cannot, no matter how it may strain, do the work of an adult. In fact, it probably cannot do more than one-fifth of what the adult, in this case the whole of the Soviet Union, can do.

## II

The industrial development of the East—and of other “backward regions” as well—has been a matter of primary concern to Soviet leaders ever since the October Revolution. As early as April, 1918, Lenin drafted a sketch-plan for the economic development of Russia in which the “rational distribution” of industry played the major rôle. Subsequently, Stalin and others took over and added to Lenin’s ideas. As a result, the principle of “decentralizing industry” has assumed such importance in Soviet thinking that it is regarded as a “doctrine” and “a component part of the theory on ways and means of building Communism.”<sup>3</sup>

It is important to note, however, that in the development of this principle, little emphasis has been placed on defense considerations as such. Lenin’s primary concern was to increase the efficiency of—to “rationalize”—the nation’s economy. He stressed two points: first, that industries should be placed near the sources of raw materials and the principal consuming areas; and second, that production should be concentrated in a few very large enterprises.<sup>4</sup> Stalin approached the problem from the standpoint of his specialty—the nationalities question. He reasoned that the “crux of the national problem in the R.S.F.S.R. lies in the obligation to put an end to that backwardness (economic, political, and cultural) of the nationalities which we have inherited from the past and to afford the backward peoples the opportunity of catching up with Central Russia politically, culturally, and economically.”<sup>5</sup> In his opinion, industrializing outlying regions would help to bind them to Russia proper; it would result in the appearance of “groups of local proletarians who will serve as a bridge between the Russian proletarians and peasants and the toilers of these republics.”<sup>6</sup>

Naturally, reference was occasionally made to the rôle which developing new industrial areas might play in safeguarding the nation from successful enemy attack. For example, at the Fifteenth Party Congress (December, 1927), Voroshilov argued that military considerations should be taken into account in planning industrial construction; that “the regionalizing of industry ought to correspond to the demands of strategic security.”<sup>7</sup> But instances of this sort were

<sup>3</sup>Planovoe Khozyaistvo, 1941, No. 2, p. 91.

<sup>4</sup>V. I. Lenin, *Sochineniya*, 2nd ed. XX, 434.

<sup>5</sup>Stenograficheskiĭ otchet X sessda Rossiiskoi Kommunisticheskoi Partii 8-16 Marta, 1921 g., p. 80.

<sup>6</sup>J. V. Stalin, *Marxism and the National and Colonial Question*, p. 156.

<sup>7</sup>XV sessd VKP (b), *Stenograficheskiĭ otchet*, pp. 886-87.



relatively rare. The basic avowed aims of the movement were not so much to render the country safe from invasion, but to (1) utilize more fully the resources of the Union, (2) relieve traffic on the over-worked railways, (3) reduce antagonism between country and town, (4) raise the level of backward districts, and (5) gain the loyalty of non-Russian peoples.

### III

For a number of years, relatively little progress was made in putting the decentralization program into effect. In 1920, Lenin worked out an electrification project (the GOELRO) according to which power resources were to be developed in four eastern regions (the Volga territory, the Urals, Western Siberia and Turkestan) as well as in the three "old industrial zones"<sup>8</sup> (the Leningrad area, the Moscow area, the South) and in the Caucasus. In 1921 Gosplan laid the foundations for future activity when, on the basis of careful study, it adopted a scheme for the division of the country into a number of economic regions.<sup>9</sup> And by 1923, three factories had been transferred from the Moscow area to Georgia, Bokhara, and Turkestan respectively.<sup>10</sup> But these early achievements obviously amounted to very little. The real launching of the program awaited the inauguration of the Five Year Plans.

The First Five Year Plan, in its original published form, provided that development of the eastern regions was to be pushed at a much faster rate than that of the country as a whole. While the fixed capital of industry for the entire Union was to be increased by 189 per cent, that for the territories beyond the Volga was to be increased by from 240 to 730 per cent. The share of the old industrial centers in the nation's total industrial capital was to be reduced or only slightly increased, while the share of new centers was to be significantly increased. Thus, while the share of the Leningrad and Central zones was to fall from 9.96 to 7.28 per cent and from 30.82 to 21.22 per cent respectively, and the share of the Ukraine was to increase from 24.5 to only 26.17 per cent, the share of the Ural region was to mount from 4.27 to 10.36 per cent; the Central Volga from .96 to 1.13; the Lower Volga from 1.55 to 2.62; Kazakhstan from .94

<sup>8</sup>*Planovoe Khozyaistvo*, 1941, No. 2, p. 94.

<sup>9</sup>*Malaya Sovetskaya Entsiklopediya*, VII, 162.

<sup>10</sup>Stalin, *loc. cit.*

to 1.79; Siberia from 1.28 to 3.20; and the Far East from .53 to 1.53.<sup>11</sup>

Ambitious though these proposals were, they were soon supplemented by even greater plans. At the Sixteenth Party Congress in June, 1930, Stalin reported that the coal and metal production of the Donbas (the principal industrial region of the South) was insufficient to satisfy the future needs of the entire nation. He insisted that a new heavy industry base would have to be created through bringing together the minerals of the Urals and the coking coal of the Kuznetsk.<sup>12</sup> The Congress then duly passed a resolution calling for the creation of a great Ural-Kuznetsk combine. Subsequently, plans were worked out for instrumentalizing this resolution through speeding up the tempo of activity in the affected areas far beyond what had been originally provided for in 1928. The Urals region was assigned the task of increasing its 1933 heavy industry production by more than ten times over 1927-28. At the same time, Siberia was scheduled to increase its total production by fourteen times and its heavy industry production by twenty times.<sup>13</sup> According to Molotov, the Ural and Kuznetsk regions together were to be producing *forty per cent* of the total production of the foundry industry of the entire Soviet Union by the end of the First Five Year Plan period.<sup>14</sup>

To facilitate the carrying out of these and other new plans, drastic measures of various sorts were quickly put into effect. A prohibition was laid on the construction of new industrial establishments in Leningrad and Moscow; capital outlays for the Ural-Kuznetsk combine were increased until they came to equal approximately one-fourth of the total invested in heavy industry in the entire country;<sup>15</sup> and the work of surveying and prospecting the geological resources of the eastern regions was considerably expanded.<sup>16</sup>

In the Second Five Year Plan (1932-1937), provision was made for consolidating and extending the gains already registered in the drive to establish new industries in the trans-Volga territories. East of a line running approximately from Arkhangelsk to Astrakhan at

<sup>11</sup>*Pyatiletnii plan narodno-khozyaistvennogo stroitelstva SSSR*, 1930, III, 40.

<sup>12</sup>*XVI sezd VKP (b) Stenograficheskii otchet*, p. 42.

<sup>13</sup>*Ibid.* p. 496.

<sup>14</sup>Report of Molotov to the Sixth All-Union Congress of Soviets in March, 1931 in *Pravda*, March 12, 1931.

<sup>15</sup>*XVII sezd VKP (b)*, *Stenograficheskii otchet*, p. 177.

<sup>16</sup>See "Geographical Research in the U.S.S.R." on pp. 11-13 of the November, 1934 publication of the Birmingham Bureau of Research on Russian Economic Conditions.

the mouth of the Volga,<sup>17</sup> it was planned to invest 41.17 per cent of the total capital to be devoted to industry in the entire Soviet Union during the five year period. Of all funds which were to be allotted to electrification, 26.74 per cent were to go to this section. At the same time, it was to receive 49.80 per cent of the total assigned to the development of coal mining; 34.96 of the total for oil; 51.75 of the total for ore extraction; 45.55 of the total for ferrous metallurgy; 76.70 of the total for non-ferrous metallurgy; 36.11 of the total for machine building; 30.28 of the total for chemical manufactures; and 47.01 of the total for building materials. More than 77 per cent of the amount set aside for geological exploration and research was to be expended there.<sup>18</sup>

It was anticipated that through these great capital outlays, the relative importance of the eastern regions in the total production of the Union could be significantly increased. Thus, it was proposed to raise their share of total Soviet coal production to 37.25 per cent; of oil and natural gas to 11.32 per cent; of iron ore to 33.38 per cent; of pig iron to 32.33 per cent; of rolled steel to 34.94 per cent; of copper to 80.74 per cent; and of metal working manufactures to 16.04 per cent.

All sections of the East were to be affected by the new drive, but as in the case of the First Five Year Plan, most emphasis was to be placed on the areas lying within the radius of the Ural-Kuznetsk combine. The rich Sverdlovsk province, the center of the Ural end of the combinat, was to be especially favored. It alone was to receive 9.7 per cent of all Soviet investments in heavy industry, and 5.6 per cent of all investments in industry generally. Industrial establishments which were to be begun, or greatly expanded, in the district included the Perm hydro-electric station, a mammoth foundry and machine building plant and also a railway car plant with a planned annual capacity of 54,000 four-axle cars, at Nizhni Tagil, the Uralmash heavy machinery plant at Sverdlovsk, and the Central Ural copper smelting combinat at Revda.

Hardly less grandiose plans were made for the Cheliabinsk province, also located in the Urals region. Here it was proposed to rush

<sup>17</sup>Included in this area are the Northern Territory, the Volga district (including the Tartar ASSR, the Central Volga, and the lower Volga); the Ural-Kuznetsk combinat districts (including the Ural region, Bashkiria, Western Siberia, and Kazakhstan); Central Asia (including Uzbek, Turkmen, the Tadzhik republics, and the Kirgiz and Kara-Kalpak autonomous republics); Eastern Siberia; and the Far East.

<sup>18</sup>These and the following data on the Second Five Year Plan have been taken from *Vtoroi pyatiletnii plan razvitiya narodnogo khozyaistva SSSR*, II, *passim*.

the great Magnitogorsk metallurgical combine to completion; to push iron ore extraction, aluminum manufacturing, and tractor production to a point where, in each, the district would attain second place in the entire Soviet Union; and to further expand the already considerable production of nickel, ferro-alloys, and worked metal.

For the Kuznetsk region, plans were made to balance the earlier expansion of coal mining facilities by building up a great metal and machinery industry. The first rolled-steel mill in the region was to be completed and a second one started; establishments for the manufacture of agricultural machinery, mining machinery, locomotives, road machinery, railway cars, automatic couplings, etc. were to be constructed; a mammoth automobile factory was to be begun; and a zinc industry was to be established. Despite the increased emphasis on metallurgy, however, the basic industry of the region—the coal industry—was not to be neglected. On the contrary, activity in this sphere was to be stepped up to such an extent that it was anticipated that 1937 production would be almost three times greater than 1932 production (20 as against 7 million tons).

Although eastern territories which lay outside the Ural-Kuznetsk combinat area were given less attention than those within, a number of decidedly ambitious projects were nevertheless worked out for them. In the case of the Federated Republic of the Kazakhs, it was proposed to expand coal mining, copper smelting, oil production, and lead mining by from five to ten times over 1932. The Central Volga territory was to be transformed into an oil refining, transportation machinery manufacturing, and food preparation center. The Far East was to have its oil and coal producing facilities greatly expanded, and was to receive its first machine manufacturing establishment, as well as an automobile assembly plant.

With the Third Five Year Plan (1937-1942), a somewhat different tack was taken in the drive to industrialize the East and in the whole program of economic decentralization than that which had been followed in the earlier plans.<sup>19</sup> Where previously emphasis had been placed almost entirely on building up new heavy industry bases in backward sections, now considerable attention was given to the development of such supplementary industries as would be necessary for a well-rounded, balanced economy in each region. Every

<sup>19</sup>The Third Five Year Plan was never published in full. The chief basic source of information about the Plan is the Stenographic Report of the 18th (March, 1939) Congress of the All-Union Communist Party (*XVIII sezd VKP (b)*, *Sten. otchet*). The data given here, unless otherwise indicated, are drawn from pp. 240-69, 282-315, 334-35, 493-501, and 648-67 of this *Report*.

economic district was to produce its own supplies of food like potatoes and vegetables, dairy and meat products, flour, confectionery products and beer, and its own supplies of consumers' goods for mass consumption. Each was also to produce everything which it needed in the way of fuel, cement, chemical fertilizer, glass, etc.

In constructing new factories and mills, narrow specialization was to be avoided, so that the whole country would not be forced to depend upon a few great factories for the supply of any given product. Thus, the practice of concentrating rolled steel production in a few special mills was to be abandoned, and each principal iron and steel producing center was to be equipped to satisfy its own rolled steel requirements. Duplicate establishments in several branches of machine building, oil refining and chemical manufacturing were to be built in a number of different areas. No more huge power stations, supplying the needs of vast areas, were to be projected; instead, small and medium-sized plants, with a capacity of 25,000 kilowatts or less, were to be relied upon. The prohibition against construction of new factories and mills in Leningrad and Moscow was to be strictly enforced, and was, if possible, to be extended to Kiev, Kharkov, Rostov, Gorki, and Sverdlovsk.

Specific plans called for greatly accelerating the development of supplementary coal fields in various eastern regions (the Volga area, the Urals, Central Asia and the Far East), so as to relieve them of dependence on the Kuznetsk Basin. (For the first time since 1928, it was anticipated that the share of the Kuznetsk in total coal production would decline rather than increase.)<sup>20</sup> In regard to petroleum, a "Second Baku" was to be created in the vast region lying between the Volga and the Urals, and exploitation of deposits in other eastern areas was to be greatly intensified. Altogether, the East was scheduled to increase its crude petroleum output from 6.5 per cent of the national total in 1939 to 21.8 per cent in 1942. A number of new refining establishments were to be constructed. In the "Second Baku" area alone it was planned to build plants with an annual capacity of 6,000,000 tons. A synthetic oil industry was even envisaged.

In the machine building industry, steam turbine works were to be built and opened for use in Sverdlovsk, Ufa, and Novosibirsk. New boiler works were to be constructed at Orsk. In Siberia, truck factories and a number of establishments for manufacturing automobile parts and supplies were to be created. Automobile assembly shops

<sup>20</sup>*Planovoe Khozyaistvo*, 1939, No. 3, p. 61.



were to be set up in the Far East. Facilities for manufacturing agricultural machinery, and for repairing and assembling tractors and combines were to be greatly expanded throughout the entire eastern area.

In the non-ferrous metal industry, the Balkhash copper smelting plant and the Central Ural and Bliava plants were to be completed. Construction was to continue on copper smelting plants in Dzhezkazgan and Amalyk, and on lead and zinc plants in the Altai region. The Ural aluminum works and aluminum works in the Kuznetsk Basin were to be opened for operation. And various new nickel works were to be rushed to completion.

Special emphasis was placed on the development of the Far East. "In answer to the aggression of Japanese fascism" it was proposed that this area be made as nearly self-sufficient as possible. The number of iron and steel mills, machine building works, cement and other building material establishments, food preparation plants, and various consumer goods factories were to be increased several fold.

#### IV

Thus did the Soviets plan for the industrialization of their immense eastern heritage. But, the question is, were these plans realized? The answer seems to be: in detail, no; in general, yes.

Particular schedules in a great many instances failed of realization by a considerable margin. For example, according to the Second Five Year Plan, coal production of the eastern districts was supposed to total over 54 million tons by 1937; it actually totaled slightly more than 41 million tons.<sup>21</sup> Iron ore production was supposed to rise to 11 million tons by 1937; it actually rose to less than 8½ million tons by 1938. Pig iron production was to equal 5½ million tons by 1937; it actually equalled slightly more than 4 million tons.<sup>22</sup> By 1939, the share of the Ural-Kuznetsk combinat in total metal production was still far short of that which Molotov had envisaged by 1933. A number of schemes, especially in regard to machine building, went almost completely awry. By 1940, some of the things proposed back in 1932 still had not been accomplished.<sup>23</sup>

Nevertheless, the *general* program of extending industry to the East was, in large measure, successfully carried out. To perceive this, one has only to consider that in the case of such basic products as coal, pig iron, steel (all types), rolled steel, and machinery of various

<sup>21</sup>*Planovoe Khozyaistvo*, 1939, No. 2, p. 53.

<sup>22</sup>*Sotsialisticheskoe stroitel'stvo soyuza SSR*, 1939, pp. 55-56.

<sup>23</sup>*Planovoe Khozyaistvo*, 1941, No. 2, p. 99.

sorts, production of eastern regions (Volga and beyond) in 1937 surpassed the production of *all Russia* (excluding territories later lost) in 1913; or that during the ten year period 1927/1928-1937, eastern production of pig iron increased by 500 per cent, of rolled steel by 375 per cent, of coal by 604 per cent, of iron ore (1929-1938) by 364 per cent, of total steel by 436 per cent, of peat (1929-1938) by 608 per cent, of petroleum by 991 per cent, of cement (1929-1938) by 769 per cent, of sugar by several thousand per cent, and of cotton fabric by 984 per cent.<sup>24</sup>

V

But, as pointed out above, the fact that industry was *extended* to the East does not mean that it was *shifted* there. Despite the great and rapid progress of new districts, the center of Russian industry remained in the old industrial zones, that is, in the South, the Central-Moscow area, the Northwestern-Leningrad area, and, in the case of petroleum, the Caucasus. After the development of the eastern regions, as before, the Soviet Union was preponderantly dependent on the West for its industrial strength.

On the basis of fairly complete data for the years immediately preceding the outbreak of the European war in September, 1939, and on the basis of fragmentary data for the years since, it seems clear that the East, at least up until the time of the German attack, could not nearly meet Soviet requirements in a single important branch of industry.

The greatest gains registered by this region were in the field of mining and metallurgy. Yet even here, its position was a decidedly secondary one. In the case of coal, it produced in 1937 (the last year for which reliable regional data are available) only 41 million tons out of an all-Union total of 127 million. It thus was responsible for less than one-third of the nation's production (32 per cent as against 60 for the South and 6 for the Central zone).<sup>25</sup> Its production of peat, used extensively as a substitute for coal, amounted to 4.2 million tons in 1938, while total production amounted to 26.4 million tons.<sup>26</sup>

Iron ore extracted in eastern districts during 1938 equaled 8.2 million tons (30 per cent of the national total); in the South it equaled 16.9 million tons (64 per cent of the total). In the same year, the East's share in total production of manganese ore, vital to

<sup>24</sup>Based on data in *Planovoe Khozyaistvo*, 1939, No. 1, pp. 58, 70; No. 2, p. 53. and in *Sotsialisticheskoe stroitel'stvo Soyuza SSR*, 1939, *passim*.

<sup>25</sup>*Planovoe Khozyaistvo*, 1939, No. 3, pp. 53, 59; 1940, No. 9, p. 105.

<sup>26</sup>*Sotsialisticheskoe stroitel'stvo Soyuza SSR*, 1939, p. 54.

steel manufacturing, was only 5 per cent, while that of the Caucasus was 59 per cent, and of the South, 34 per cent.<sup>27</sup>

The pig iron yield of eastern territories in 1937 was but 4.2 million tons, 28 per cent of a national total of 14.6 million. As against this, the yield of the South was 9.2 million, 63 per cent of the total.<sup>28</sup> In regard to steel, the situation was somewhat better. The East in 1937 accounted for 6.3 million tons of steel of all types out of a total of 17.7,<sup>29</sup> and 4.1 million tons of rolled steel out of a total of 12.9.<sup>30</sup> At that, though, it was considerably behind the South in importance. While its proportionate share of rolled steel was 31 per cent, and of steel of all types, 35 per cent, that of the South was 57 per cent and 52 per cent respectively.

Only in the production of non-ferrous metals, other than aluminum, did the eastern area occupy a dominant position. By far the greater part of all the copper, nickel, lead, tin, zinc, tungsten, chromium, silver, gold and molybdenum produced in the Soviet Union was extracted and refined in territories beyond the Volga.<sup>31</sup> The case of aluminum, though, was decidedly different. Although there are reputedly rich deposits of bauxite in the Urals and other sections of the East, and although projects were worked out at the beginning of the Second Five Year Plan for the exploitation of these deposits and for the establishment of aluminum plants at both ends of the Ural-Kuznetsk combinat,<sup>32</sup> as late as 1938 no aluminum was produced outside of the Leningrad and Ukrainian areas. Under the Third Five Year Plan, work on the long-projected Ural and Kuznetsk plants was pushed to completion.<sup>33</sup> However, by the end of 1940, these plants together were probably not producing more than a few per cent of the nation's total.<sup>34</sup>

Cement production in the East in 1937 amounted to 1.4 million tons, or 26 per cent of an all-Union total of 5.4 million. The Third Five Year Plan provided for a considerable increase in this, but even if the new schedules should be fully carried out, still, less than two-fifths of total cement would be produced in the East.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>27</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 55.

<sup>28</sup>*Planovoe Khozyaistvo*, 1939, No. 1, p. 70.

<sup>29</sup>*Sotsialisticheskoe stroitel'stvo Soyuza SSR*, 1939, p. 57.

<sup>30</sup>*Planovoe Khozyaistvo*, 1939, No. 1, p. 70.

<sup>31</sup>*Planovoe Khozyaistvo*, 1941, No. 2, p. 101.

<sup>32</sup>*Vtoroi pyatiletnii plan razvitiya narodnogo khozyaistva*, p. 132.

<sup>33</sup>*XVIII sezd VKP (b)*, *Sten. otchet*.

<sup>34</sup>Exact data are unavailable. See *The Christian Science Monitor*, Oct. 16, 1941, for one estimate.

<sup>35</sup>*Planovoe Khozyaistvo*, 1939, No. 2, pp. 81-98; No. 3, p. 62.

A quick, over-all picture of the situation in mining, ferrous metallurgy, and cement industries can be secured from the following table:

	Total U.S.S.R. Million tons	Eastern Regions Mil. tons.	Western Regions Mil. tons.	Eastern Regions % total	Western Regions % total
Coal, 1937	127.1	41.3	85.7	32	67
Peat, 1938	26.4	4.2	22.2	15	85
Iron ore, 1938	26.5	8.2	18.3	30	69
Manganese ore, 1938	2.7	.1	2.6	5	95
Pig iron, 1937	14.6	4.2	10.4	28	71
All steel, 1937	17.7	6.3	11.3	35	64
Rolled steel, 1937	12.9	4.1	8.8	31	68
Cement, 1937	5.4	1.4	4.0	26	73

Next to mining and metallurgy, the eastern area was strongest in machine building. Throughout the period of the Five Year Plans, plant after plant was projected and constructed in one or another of the great new industrial centers. The result was a constant increase in the relative importance of the East in this vital branch of industry.

Despite this, however, the region remained far behind the old industrial districts as a source of supply of machines of important types. As late as November, 1940, *Planovoe Khozyaistvo* reported:

The principal mass of the largest and most specialized machine-tool factories are situated in the old industrial regions—in the Central Industrial Region, in the Ukraine and in the Northwest Region. It is particularly important to note that in these regions are produced the most intricate and skilled machine tools. Thus the chief points of production of automatic machines are Moscow and Kiev; of polishing tools, Moscow and Kharkov; of boring tools, Leningrad; etc. In the Volga region, in the Urals, and even more in Siberia the machine tool building industry has grown feebly in quantity, and especially feebly in quality. In these regions are produced, for the most part, simple machine tools . . . [Their] needs . . . for skilled machines are satisfied chiefly by the machine tool building factories of the old industrial regions.

The production of hoisting and transporting equipment also is primarily concentrated in the old industrial regions.

Production of tractor supplies is concentrated in the South—Ukraine and Northern Caucasus—in the Central Black Soil Region and in the Volga Area.<sup>36</sup>

The emphasis placed on constructing "duplicate enterprises" in the Third Five Year Plan was largely due to this "maldistribution" of machine building facilities. However, up until the beginning of 1941 very little had been done to improve the situation. According to a statement in the February, 1941, number of *Planovoe Khozyaistvo*:

<sup>36</sup>*Planovoe Khozyaistvo*, 1940, No. 11, pp. 48-51.

The complex development of the economy of economic regions dictates the necessity of constructing duplicate enterprises in new economic regions. At the present time, especially in various branches of machine building, we have productive bases in only two or three, and sometimes in one, industrial center. Thus, for example, high-pressure boilers were produced in 1939 only in the Rostov district and in Leningrad; stationary steam turbines only in Kharkov and Leningrad; large-scale water turbines only in Leningrad; locomobiles only in the Nikolaev and Orlovsk districts; turbo-generators only in Kharkov and Leningrad; hydro-generators only in Leningrad.

Already in the three first years of the Third Five Year Plan, the construction of duplicate enterprises has been begun in a number of regions. However, this construction has not yet fulfilled the tasks set down by the Third Five Year Plan. Instead of the duplicate factories' eliminating the element of chance involved in the country's having to depend on a few enterprises for vital industrial products, the new factories find themselves dependent on old industrial bases for the supply of parts essential to the manufacture of the machines which they are building. For example, in the case of duplicate factories in the Urals, the factory "Uralelectromashina" receives porcelain insulators from factories in Moscow, Leningrad and Slaviansk . . . The Ural turbine factory receives from Leningrad asbestos padding for the production of turbines. . . <sup>37</sup>

As far as is known, automobile and aeroplane production was likewise concentrated in the older industrial districts. In the case of automobiles, during the late thirties, plants were established, or at least started, in the Volga region, in the Urals, and in the Kuznetsk Basin. But the combined capacity of these, even according to rather optimistic original plans, was far less than that of the great autoworks at Gorki and Moscow.<sup>38</sup> As for aeroplane and aeroplane motor factories, apparently most of these were located in the Central Industrial Region. According to Jane's *All the World's Aircraft*, of roughly fifteen large aircraft factories and four aero-engine factories which existed in the Soviet Union in 1940, eight of the most important were in either Moscow or nearby suburban cities; eight were distributed among Gorki, Odessa, Taganrog, Sevastopol, Voronezh, Rybinsk (Ivanovo area), Zaporozhe, and Leningrad (small); and only two were in the eastern area (one, not completed, at Kazan, and one at Perm).<sup>39</sup> The situation with respect to tractors was somewhat more favorable. Two of the greatest tractor plants in the country were located at Cheliabinsk, in the Urals, and at Stalingrad, in the

<sup>37</sup>Planovoe Khozyaistvo, 1941, No. 2, p. 99.

<sup>38</sup>Vtoroi pyatiletnii plan, pp. 55-65; E. Haudan, *Das Motorisierungspotential der Sowjetunion*, p. 61.

<sup>39</sup>It is obvious that too much faith should not be put in these data. It is highly probable that because of military considerations, many details related to the distribution of plane factories were not correctly or fully published by the Soviet government.



Volga area. The output of these, however, was not as large as that of plants in Kharkov and Leningrad.<sup>40</sup>

The subordinate position occupied by the East in machine building, and in metal manufacturing generally for that matter, is strikingly revealed by the fact that its share in steel consumption was decidedly smaller than its share in steel production. Of a total of 12.9 million tons of rolled steel produced by the entire Soviet Union in 1937, eastern districts were responsible for 4.1 million tons. Yet these same districts used only 2.8 million tons. Thus, while they produced 31 per cent of all rolled steel, they consumed slightly less than 23 per cent. This meant that they had to ship about a third of their yield Westward for manufacture into finished products.<sup>41</sup>

In regard to petroleum, the East also was of secondary importance. Despite energetic efforts on the part of Soviet authorities to increase the yield of eastern fields during the first two Five Year Plan periods, by 1938 they were producing only about 7 per cent of a 32.2 million ton Soviet total. Over and against this, the old, and strategically unsafe, Caucasian fields were producing more than 90 per cent of the total.<sup>42</sup> With the drafting of the Third Five Year Plan, especially with the working out of the "Second Baku" project, it was anticipated that this situation would be decidedly improved.<sup>43</sup> However, according to a recent study, the "development of the 2nd Baku proved to be a far slower and more painstaking task than had been believed . . ." and, as a consequence, ". . . in a geographical sense, the Soviet oil industry remained, in the first months of 1941, just about where it had been in 1937."<sup>44</sup>

In the production of consumers' goods, the East was weaker than in any other respect. At the most, its output of clothing materials, house furnishings and utensils, prepared foods and drinks, tobacco products, luxury articles, etc. amounted to no more than a fraction of the nation's total.<sup>45</sup> For example, of a total Soviet production of 3.4 billion meters of cotton fabric in 1937, the eastern territories were responsible for less than 4 per cent. Of 831 thousand tons of paper products, they, despite the extensiveness of their forest resources, were responsible for only 27 per cent. They produced but

<sup>40</sup>Haudan, *op. cit.*, pp. 62 ff.

<sup>41</sup>*Planovoe Khozyaistvo*, 1939, No. 1, p. 72

<sup>42</sup>*Sotsialisticheskoe stroitel'stvo Soyuza S.S.R.*, 1939, pp 51-52.

<sup>43</sup>*Planovoe Khozyaistvo*, 1940, No. 5, pp. 91-97.

<sup>44</sup>Alexander Nazarov, "The Soviet Oil Industry," *The Russian Review*, November, 1941, p. 84.

<sup>45</sup>See *Planovoe Khozyaistvo*, 1939, No. 3, pp. 114-23; see also *Bolshoi Sovetskii Atlas Mira*, I, maps 141-43.

14 per cent of a total of 182 million pairs of shoes, and less than 7 per cent of 24 million hundredweights of sugar.<sup>46</sup> Their share in the manufacture of electrical appliances (light fixtures, heating devices, radios, etc.) equaled, at the outside, only a few per cent.<sup>47</sup>

## VI

All in all, then, the new industrial districts of the East, despite the great progress which they had made during the previous thirteen years, were not, on the eve of the German invasion, in a position to support, on anything approaching a full scale, the immense armies of Russia in a modern, industrial war. They simply did not possess the facilities to enable them to shoulder, in addition to performing their own assigned tasks, the burden which normally is borne by the vastly more productive industrial regions of the West.

The meaning of this seems clear and unmistakable. The industries of the East, even though their production has been greatly accelerated since the outbreak of war, can hardly be expected, *by themselves*, to make up for the losses which have so far been suffered by the Soviets. Much less can they be expected to make up for any further losses. Unless they, and the industries which still remain in the West, are greatly supplemented, the war potential of Russia must inevitably strongly decline.

There is a chance, of course, that provision has already been made for supplementing them. It may be that since June last, sufficient machinery and workmen have been evacuated from occupied and threatened territories to make possible something like full, normal production of *western* industries in an eastern locale.

At least there have been reports to this effect. Scarcely two weeks after the Germans crossed the border, Ambassador Oumansky told former U. S. Ambassador Joseph E. Davies that arrangements were being made in his country to dismantle and remove all industrial machinery before the danger of German capture became imminent.<sup>48</sup> W. Averell Harriman on his return from the Moscow supply conference told how this had been done in accordance with pre-arranged plans.<sup>49</sup> Ambassador Litvinov, on his arrival in the United States, told reporters that the machinery in occupied regions had either been destroyed or removed.<sup>50</sup> At the end of January, 1942, a Soviet offi-

<sup>46</sup>*Sotsialisticheskoe stroitel'stvo Soyuza S.S.R.*, 1939, pp. 72, 74, 75, 79.

<sup>47</sup>*Planovoe Khozyaistvo*, 1940, No. 11, p. 50.

<sup>48</sup>Joseph E. Davies, *Mission to Moscow*, p. 490.

<sup>49</sup>*The New York Herald Tribune*, October 2, 1941.

<sup>50</sup>*The New York Times*, December 14, 1941.

cial stated: "Even in those districts which the Germans managed temporarily to occupy, they did not find any large industrial enterprises, since all the chief industrial enterprises of these districts had in due time been evacuated far to the rear. At their new sites these plants are functioning effectively, supplying their constantly increasing production to the front. Thus the German occupants did not and could not capture any Soviet war industry."<sup>51</sup>

American correspondents have described trains travelling at express speed day after day carrying machine tools, machinery and skilled workers from factories near the front to the Urals area.<sup>52</sup> One visited a factory in the rear which had been moved in three weeks and "was operating at an accelerated rate."<sup>53</sup>

Many reports have told of plants being set up in their new locations and resuming production in record time. The Soviet press cited a factory of which two departments started functioning within fifteen days of the arrival of its equipment and workers in the East; ten days later the entire factory was said to be back at work at full speed.<sup>54</sup> The Voroshilov Mills were reported to have been transferred from Dnepropetrovsk in the first part of September and to have started turning out shells by October 10.<sup>55</sup> *Krasnaya Zvezda* claimed in February, 1942, that the great Kirov armament works at Leningrad had been evacuated to the Urals and that thousands of its workers, flown to the new location, were turning out giant tanks.<sup>56</sup> A workers' committee described how a small plant was shifted from the front to Sverdlovsk. Remarkable teamwork and efficiency at both ends were said to have resulted in the plant's resuming operations within six days after arrival, although the journey had taken fourteen days. According to the British Ministry of Economic Warfare, at least one mill turning out steel for tanks had been successfully evacuated to the eastern provinces.

Obviously, reports such as these cannot be disregarded. There must have been a not inconsiderable movement of industrial facilities eastward as the conflict pushed over, or to the outskirts of, old

<sup>51</sup>A. S. Shcherbakov, Chief of the Soviet Information Bureau, in his Report at the Lenin Memorial Meeting in Moscow, January 21, 1942. English text in *Information Bulletin* of the Soviet Embassy in Washington, Special Supplement, January 24, 1942, p. 3.

<sup>52</sup>E.g., Walter Kerr in *New York Herald Tribune*, November 23, 1941.

<sup>53</sup>C. L. Sulzberger in *The New York Times*, October 31, 1941.

<sup>54</sup>Article in *Pravda*, December 4, 1941; via radio from Khabarovsk, as reported in *PM*, December 5, 1941.

<sup>55</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>56</sup>*The New York Times*, February 28, 1942.

industrial regions. Nevertheless, too much should not be expected to result from this. In view of the necessarily great element of chance involved in the transfer of entire industrial establishments from one locality to another during a hectic military campaign; and, more important, in view of the severe limitations on the ability of the eastern districts to expand their production of the basic materials required by the transferred industries (there have been no reports of the movement of coal, iron ore and manganese ore mines, and only one report of the movement of a steel mill!), it appears extremely unlikely that the evacuated plants can, on the whole, fulfill normal peacetime, much less stepped-up wartime, quotas.

For this reason, the people of the United Nations, and especially the people of the United States, must, if they are not to risk eventual disaster on the eastern front, regard the prevailing optimism as to the capacity of Russia to supply most of her own war needs as nothing more than wishful thinking of the type which has so often in the past led to a tragic "too little, too late." They must recognize that, in the long run, the striking power of the Russian armies, on which so very much depends, will increase or decrease in direct ratio to the extent and speed with which the tools of war are supplied from the outside.

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# The Religious Sources of Russian Populism

BY G. P. FEDOTOV

**"P**OPULISM" is etymologically the correct English translation of "Narodnichestvo," but the full original meaning of the word is untranslatable. Nowhere, outside Russia, is an analogous movement or state of mind to be found. In Russia, however, it covers a very extensive field of thought, of life, of ethical and political activity and gives a key to the understanding of the Russian mind, although it certainly does not exhaust all of its contents.

Narodnichestvo in the accepted and narrow political sense was a trend of Russian socialism—peasant socialism—which based its hopes for the collectivist society of the future upon the Russian "mir" or village commune. In a broader sense, Narodnichestvo colored many sections of Russian political life. The Marxists and the Westernisers remained outside this trend, but there were Narodniks among the liberals of the Kadet party as well as among the ultra-reactionary "Union of the Russian people," which in a sense was also a populist party. Least of all is one prepared to meet Narodniks among the Russian beaurocracy, and yet there was a whole department of the government, the Ministry of Agriculture, which was infected with populist tendencies. One of the last of the Narodniks was the Tsar Nicholas II himself. The modern world was strongly distasteful to him. He was romantically fond of ancient "Holy Russia" and up to the last day of his life preserved his faith in the loyalty and the Christian virtues of simple country folk. He liked contacts with servants and soldiers, sought for spiritual guidance from ignorant monks and "holy fools," and in the end allowed the destiny of the whole Empire to fall into the hands of a fatal Russian "muzhik."

What then is the broader meaning of Narodnichestvo? It is not easy to give it precise definition. One would be tempted to say "all for the people and all from the people," if this were not so delusively near the classical formula of democracy. In Russia "all for the people" meant: give up or sacrifice all cultural values for the welfare of the people; and "all from (not by) the people" meant that



the people themselves were thought of as the source of all, and in particular of all moral values. Western democracies, however, had never considered culture and the people as contradictory terms and had never opposed culture as did the Russian populists. Nor did the democracies seek the origin of values in the mysterious depths of the people; their faith, rather, was in science, and science is created by the few.

The Russian socialist Narodnichestvo originated about 1870 and reached its climax in the seventies. "Land and Freedom" and "Black Repartition" were the two purely populist political parties. Both rejected the struggle for political freedom and constitutional or even republican government in a bourgeois society. Socialism, they believed, was to be born immediately out of the Russian peasant "mir," with its rather anarchist political implications. These parties soon began to decline, but at the threshold of the twentieth century a new Narodnik socialist party (the Social-Revolutionary Party or "S.-R.") came into being as a mighty rival to the Marxian Social-Democratic Party or "S.-D." Its leaders guided the Provisional Government in 1917, and it obtained the majority vote in the elections for the Constituent Assembly. The Social-Revolutionaries, however, were not purely Narodnik — they were strongly influenced by Marxian or western socialist thought. This second generation of Narodniks was already composed of political democrats; eclectic in many respects, they preserved the old faith in the socialist opportunities of the Russian "mir." They were impoverished inheritors, but always believed themselves to be the faithful guardians of the glorious past.

In the eighteen seventies, during the heyday of the populist movement, thousands of boys and girls, chiefly undergraduates of universities and in part from among the nobility, after some study of socialist literature and some attempts at social work, "went to the people." The expression "go to the people," or more exactly "into the people," became a slogan of a whole generation.

The young men and women who took part in the movement left their families, gave up all material support from the bourgeois world and settled in villages among the peasants, often in peasant disguise, doing some manual work and living in the same sorry material conditions in which the Russian peasant lived. Their motives were twofold: they wished to help the people, to teach them, to cure them, to take care of their children; but they also wished to carry to them the socialist doctrines, to clarify their presupposed communist instincts and so prepare the social revolution.

This propaganda experiment ended in failure. The people, loyal to the Church and to the Tsar, repudiated the apostles of socialism, thus causing them to look for other political tactics which many found in terrorism. However, this reaction was far from general. Most of the Narodniks, having abandoned political propaganda, remained with the people as cultural workers—as teachers, doctors, agricultural experts, and statisticians—forming the framework of the provincial “intelligentsia” and often sacrificing for this modest work the prospects of brilliant scientific or other professional careers. Without these voluntary and self-denying workers, the young Russian Zemstvo (county self-government) could not have achieved the tremendous cultural work that it did.

The impulse for this social service, however, was not only, as in all English and American social work, the wish to help, but was the desire to acquire from the people the high ethical ideals which were ascribed to them. There was also something irrational in it—the desire for sacrifice, to strip oneself of all the privileges of wealth, of birth, of culture, and to expiate the historical sins of one’s slaveholding fathers. Observing closely the mind of the Russian intelligentsia, one cannot rid oneself of the idea that sometime the motive of sacrifice was everything and the positive work had but a secondary importance.

The Russian literature of the period (1860-1880) was strongly Narodnik in tendency. It described the sufferings and patience of the peasants and attempted to reveal their ethical depth. Nekrasov, Gleb Uspensky, and Korolenko were its most outstanding and purest representatives. Tolstoy and Dostoevsky, whose lives coincide in part with this period, can certainly not be classified as pure Narodniks, and it was precisely for this reason that the two great writers had little influence at that time. Yet they had Narodnik elements within them. Dostoevsky in his *House of the Dead* confessed that his own religious conversion was due to intercourse with the people as represented by its most abject and criminal sons. Tolstoy had always cherished the ideal of a life of simple peasant labor in communion with mother earth—a life which, after his conversion, he proclaimed to be the universal norm of Christian society. Turgenev alone among the Russian authors of the time remained aloof from and was rather cool to Narodnik ideals. Despite the excellent and most sympathetic pictures of peasant life in his *Sportsman’s Sketches*, he was too much of a Westerniser to share in purely Russian “follies.”

All this calls for an explanation. The phenomenon of Narodnichestvo is strange not only to a European observer, it was also quite

new to Russian soil. It would have been a puzzle for Pushkin (d. 1837) and for his contemporaries, and it remained a puzzle for those survivors of the thirties and the forties who lived long enough to contemplate this moral disease, this "madness" of their sons.

The Russian intelligentsia, called into being by Peter the Great, had had up to the time of Pushkin other ideals of life. Those were the men of Enlightenment. The big issues for them were civilization, art and science, and the greatness of Russia as an Empire. They tried to live the full life, they knew how to enjoy it—in culture, in love, in war, and in politics. They could think of the people only as an object of education. Their aim was to raise the people to the level of Western civilization and not to bring themselves down to the peoples' level.

The breakdown of the régime of Nicholas I (the Crimean War 1854-56), preceded by a period of withering and decay, was the signal for the great revival. New social groups, sons of the clergy, of the small bourgeoisie—the so-called *raznochintsy*—acquired culture and influence together with the ancient nobility. They had no manners, no knowledge of foreign languages or of Western social life, but were good workers, with a craving for books and ideas, though rather elementary ones. And, besides, they were better acquainted with the people and their way of life than the noble enlighteners had been. They began to draw to them the sons and daughters of the nobility and to impose on them their democratic tastes and aspirations. The immediate result was the lowering of cultural standards, but at the same time, the appearance of a new mode of living, more vital, practical, and dynamic.

Narodnichestvo was not the first creed of the new intelligentsia. Their first childhood disease was "Nihilism," but this was quickly overcome (though not for ever), and Narodnichestvo remained master of the situation.

In their political and philosophical creeds (socialist and materialist) the Narodniks were conscious Westernisers. They abhorred the old Muscovite Russia with its Orthodox religion, the Russian Empire with its rigid class structure and aristocratic civilization, as well as the wealthy, complacent, and worldly Europe. They had a horror of civilization as a whole and they looked to the people as to the sole redeemer of all social evils. Despite their conscious atheism, their whole attitude towards life (including the thirst for martyrdom) was a religious one, and so calls for a religious explanation.

Dostoevsky saw, and has shown us, that Russian atheism had religious rather than rational roots. If, however, the attempt to offer a

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religious key to the problem of Narodnichestvo would seem to be a daring undertaking, one needs only to realize the whole cultural background of these decades of Russian life. Of the three Narodnik authors named above, Nekrasov's tone is outspokenly Christian. With peculiar warmth he tells of the religious feelings of his peasant heroes and even of the cult and customs of the Orthodox Church. His main lyrical motive is the beauty of suffering and sacrifice. This attitude is of course hardly consistent with his conscious revolutionary convictions, and this conflict is the source of many contradictions in his poetry. And one can thoroughly understand why Nekrasov could so deeply impress the daughters of the last Tsar in their Siberian imprisonment. In this "revolutionary" poet they discovered a Christian Narodnik so akin to the faith in which they themselves had been brought up.

What has been said of Nekrasov could also be repeated, with more or less emphasis, of Uspensky and Korolenko. Moreover, we cannot forget the two giants who dominated Russian literature at the end of the nineteenth century. The intelligentsia could reject and curse Tolstoy and Dostoevsky because of their reactionary attitudes (real or imaginary), yet it could not avoid falling under their spell; for these men uttered with strength and power that which lay in the depth of the Russian soul and in the soul of the intelligentsia itself.

It is a very interesting experience to walk through some Russian art gallery and to study the subjects of the Russian realist school of painting, the so-called "Peredvizhniki" (Itinerants). The Peredvizhniki were the favorite artists of the Russian radical intelligentsia. They were true Narodniks in their predilection for subjects picturing peasant life, the sufferings of the Russian people, suffering in general. But it is striking to note how often Jesus of the Gospels appears on their canvases. Polenov, Kramskoy, Gay, and so many others, are first of all, painters of Christ; not of God-Man, in Whom they had ceased to believe, but of the man Jesus, who was bequeathed to them by the genius of the preceding generation, Ivanov, whose lifetime work was inspired by "Christ's appearance to the people."

This Christ of the Gospels, either man or God-Man, appears also in the verses of two minor poets of a somewhat later period (eighties and nineties), who were very popular in their time: Nadson and K.R.

N. K. Mikhailovsky, one of the literary leaders of the Narodnik intelligentsia, tells of an episode, which is extremely characteristic of the religious attitude of the Narodnichestvo. He describes what a powerful impression was made upon him, when quite a young man, by Semiradsky's picture "The Christians before Nero." The young

revolutionary felt at once that he and his friends belonged to the group of the condemned, to those whose faith he repudiated, and that his enemies—the Russian “Christian” government—were akin to the pagan magistrates. One could not grasp more acutely the contradiction between rational creeds and the irrational motives of conduct of this Russian generation.

The same Mikhailovsky, defined the attitude of his young contemporaries regarding the question of personal liberty in these paradoxical words: “Let them flog us: why, they flog the muzhik!”

These subconscious elemental forces at times became so strong that they broke through the barriers of the imposed positivist world outlook and resulted in the religious conversion of some of the Narodniks. The first case of this kind which shocked many of the Narodniks, was the conversion of the Malikov circle to a kind of Christian evangelical sect in the seventies. One of the group, N. V. Chaikovsky, upheld his Christian convictions throughout the revolution of 1917 and to the end of his life. The other famous Christian Narodnik was Catherine Breshko-Breshkovskaya, “the grandmother of the Russian Revolution,” most of whose life was spent in deportations and imprisonment and who remained to her last breath a courageous confessor of her humanitarian and deistic religion.

The second mass conversion came in the eighties and nineties, when hundreds of Narodniks, answering the call of Tolstoy, built land communities or settled among the peasants, not for political propaganda this time, but for a religious life of simplicity and labor. “Simplicity” was then the great slogan, covering a wide field of moral life. Simplicity, rather than love, was the main spring of the “Tolstoyan” movement.

The third mass conversion of the intelligentsia coincided with the symbolist movement and the Orthodox revival of the twentieth century, but at that time Narodnichestvo was already dying.

## II

We have now cleared the ground for the religious appreciation of Russian Narodnichestvo. It can be conceived as a mighty and sudden surge of elemental religious forces rising in the Russian intelligentsia, deprived for so long of religious nourishment. These forces came obviously from below and were then caught and transmitted to the upper classes by the *raznochintsy* who acted as mediators between the people and the upper classes of society. Brought up in families still strictly Christian, and in many cases educated in ecclesiastical seminaries, the *raznochintsy* had thrown off their religious beliefs



too quickly and too lightheartedly. But the religious attitude towards life, a specifically Christian and Russian one, proved stronger than their conscious convictions.

Besides personal contacts with the people, the sixties brought forth a vast amount of ethnographical material, which led to a better understanding of the people's life and mind. The reign of Nicholas I (1825-55), witnessed the birth of Russian ethnographical science. This research was carried on with enthusiasm in the fifties and sixties, arousing great interest in the various branches of Russian folklore. Religious legends, apocrypha, and "spiritual songs" especially enjoyed great popularity. It was the joy of discovery, of the first contact with the soul of one's own nation. After one and a half centuries of the Western school, this new impression was morally, if not intellectually, overwhelming, and there is nothing astonishing, therefore, in the penetration of these subconscious forces into Russian life and thought. It remains for us to define these forces, to determine their religious character and value, and to see what kind of Christianity this was which dominated the subconscious mind of the Narodniks.

It might seem a paradoxical and anti-historical procedure to seek an answer to this question in the very remote history of Russia, in the first written documents of her literature, and yet we shall make this experiment.

The Russia of the eleventh century was a newly converted country. Christianity was only beginning to expand throughout its enormous spaces, but its impact on elected souls was already powerful. The Russian land was bringing forth its first Christian saints. Their lives, not yet passed into legend, represent the first monuments of the Russian written word.

It is a well-known fact that the lives of saints are a stereotyped form of literature. Moreover, the first literary works of a semi-barbaric nation are bound to be cast from their cultural patterns—in Russia's case from the Greek. And it is true that the lives of the Russian saints largely exploit Greek translated material. Yet in what they present of their own, they bear witness to an original, non-Greek, and profoundly Russian religious experience. This is a true miracle of the birth of a new religious national soul. At the first contact with the Gospel the new-born nation responded to it in a manner which remained its own up to the end.

Here are some examples:

In the life of St. Theodosius, the founder of the Kievo-Pechersky monastery (eleventh century), we have some precious and original

features of the childhood history of the future monk. A son of well-to-do parents, he likes to wear "poor and patched clothing." When forced to put on good clothes, he feels it "a heavy burden upon him." He wore "poor garb" through all his life and this sometimes gave rise to humiliating incidents. After the death of his father, the boy "used to go to the fields and there work humbly with his slaves," despite the protests of his class-conscious mother. He told her he wished to be "as one of the poor."—"Listen to me, mother, o listen I beseech you: our Lord, Jesus Christ himself, became poor and humble, giving us the example that we also may humiliate ourselves for His sake."

Humility is, of course, a general Christian virtue; yet such a specifically social form of it as the voluntary poverty of a layman, the sharing in the life of the poor, has no parallels in Greek hagiography. It belongs to the creative invention of Theodosius or of the new-born Russian Christianity.

The first canonized saints in Russia were laymen—the princes Boris and Gleb, murdered by their brother Svyiatopolk in the latter's struggle for power—and they remained the most venerated saints of ancient Russia, the patrons of the Russian nation. Their claim to holiness is their voluntary death, their non-resistance to the political crime committed against them. The main motive of the young princes is the imitation of Christ's sacrificial death. "If he sheds my blood, I shall be a martyr of my Lord," Boris says. The words of his last prayer before the icon of Christ were: "My Lord Jesus Christ who appeared on earth in this image, who vouchsafed to be crucified willingly and to accept suffering for our sin's sake, grant me also to suffer."

Here again, the Greek theological tradition did not promise a martyr's crown to the victim of a political crime. It did not even require non-resistance to evil. This was a Russian religious discovery made in the spirit of the Gospel.

The "poor garb" of Theodosius has a long history. We meet with it in almost every description of the ancient Russian saints. In Greek or Latin parallels this feature is very rare, almost exceptional. (There we even find ascetic fathers who condemn carelessness in dress as a sign of spiritual pride). The greatest of the ancient Russian saints, St. Sergius of Radonezh, reproduces, and even emphasizes, the pattern of Theodosius' humility. He is an abbot without power, without authority. He also, like Theodosius, was mistaken for a simple monk, while doing manual labor, and was insulted by a coarse peasant.

And what is to be said about the "holy fools," this specifically Russian religious phenomenon, so common even in nineteenth century Russia? In them self-emptying ascetic poverty reached its limits, they stripped themselves of their human reason and of moral decency. When brought to such a degree, humility already becomes a danger. However, every deep experience in spiritual life is dangerous.

As to the voluntary deaths of Boris and Gleb, the Russian people, and sometimes even the Russian Church, see in non-resistance, in a lamb-like sacrificial death of a young innocent person, a sufficient reason for canonization.

It is obvious that both these traits repeat or imitate the humility and sacrificial death of the incarnate God. In theological terminology there is a special word for this aspect of Christ's ministry and of Christ's devotion. The term is "Kenoticism" (Phil.11,7). The Greek word *Kenosis* means literally evacuation, self-emptying, or self-stripping. Coming down to earth, the Heavenly Christ strips off his divine glory to be invested with the "poor garb" of humanity. Kenoticism, of course, is a general and necessary moment in every Christian ethical system and confession. Yet nowhere, perhaps, in such degree as in Russia, did it become the leading trend of the national religious mind; not the unique, but the most significant and dominating spiritually.

Moral and religious Kenoticism must not be confused with other types of asceticism, not even with humility; or if it is humility, then of a particular kind. Kenoticism is not like asceticism a means of purification but an end in itself. It is a downward movement of love, a descending, self-humiliating love, which finds its joy in being with the rejected. Unnatural though this may seem to a pagan heart, in the order of grace it is a natural, though a rare blossom of the Christian life.

We must note also a secondary, but for us important feature of Russian Kenoticism—its social character. Unlike humility it is demonstrative and catches the eye because it is religiously connected with fellow-men. It is to them that the disciple of Christ descends, it is their lot that he is willing to share, even if his inward motive is the love of God and not the love of man.

This Kenotic conception of Christianity remained always a specifically Russian religious feature. Yet it was never the unique Russian conception and not even always the predominant one. It is clear that empires, even calling themselves holy, are not built upon Kenoticism. When Moscow began to build a strong centralized state with

the aid of the Russian Church, Kenoticism had to be put aside and to yield to another, more positive, more earthly and reasonable idea of Christian life. The ritualistic and social Christianity of St. Joseph of Volotsk became a truly Muscovite form of religion in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Kenoticism, represented by the "holy fools," descended to the lower strata of the people, where we find it still in full flower in the nineteenth century.

Strange as it might seem, the Slavophiles in their search for the sources of Russian Orthodoxy did not appreciate as they should have its most Russian trend. In the first place, they did not distinguish between the Russian and the Byzantine religious mind, and so looked for inspiration to the historically nearest and most accessible age of the Moscow tsardom. Besides, religion was for them one of the sources of national self-consciousness, if not of pride. They tried to reaffirm their national feeling which was humiliated by the inferiority complex of the Westernisers and to find it in Russian Christianity. They had an awareness of the humility of the Russian Christ. (Tyutchev's poem), yet the main line of historical development passed from the early, religious Slavophiles to the imperialists of the reign of Alexander III. Kenoticism was left to the lot of the atheist Narodniks. This is the most striking paradox of the Russian nineteenth century.

But Kenoticism alone does not account for the second feature of the Narodnik movement—the idealization of the people. The descending movement of love and self-humiliation does not presuppose or require a positive value in the object of love. Like Christ one loves those who are unworthy. One tries to save those who are lost and damned, not the just or the saintly. It was the romanticism of the early nineteenth century which sought hidden treasures in the people, and in this search the Russian Slavophiles stood upon common ground with the Narodniks. The Slavophiles had learned this admiration for the people from the romantics and transmitted it to the Narodniks (through the intermediary of the ethnographers). In the course of this migration this admiration changed its object many times. With the romantics in the West it was primarily the quest for beauty, for what remained of primitive heathen culture, hidden beneath the dust of modern civilization. The Slavophiles sought and found in the people the Orthodox faith with its moral implications and strictly ritual forms of life. The Narodniks sought ethical values—egalitarian justice, charity, humble nobility of heart—all a Christian inheritance.

These findings were not all a romantic illusion. It was a fact that the Russian peasantry in the nineteenth century had not outlived the medieval age of the organic Christian (or more correctly Christian-pagan) world outlook. But it was an illusion when the Socialists saw in these Christians survivals the effects of manual work or of particular forms of property (the rural community). The people, however, had indeed some lessons to teach the uprooted, spiritually helpless but morally thirsty and eager sons of the intelligentsia.

What was the end of the Narodnik movement? The religious conversion, of which we have spoken, was the lot of but a few. The majority lost their faith in the people or exchanged their ethical adventures for merely political or cultural activities.

The appearance of Russian Marxism in the nineties here played a decisive part. Marxism, with its ironical attitude to every kind of idealism, struck the first terrible blow at Narodnik ideology. The aesthetic movement of the nineties (decadence and symbolism) was the second blow. In reaction against the pan-moralism of the previous generation, the decadents denied morals as radically as aesthetics were denied by the Narodniks. The third blow came from the relatively successful revolution of 1905-06. A limited political freedom and a greater freedom of thought and speech drew the intelligentsia's energies to higher spheres of culture. The people were forgotten. Even the new Orthodox revival took an anti-Kenotic, aesthetic and nationalist appearance. The Eros of beauty supplanted the Agape of humiliated Christ.

If the intelligentsia was changing, the people changed no less. Since the nineties the Russian novelists had portrayed a new type of peasant. The *muzhik* of Chekhov, of Gorky, of Bunin has no feature in common with the peasant of Turgenev, Uspensky, Tolstoy. Was it, perhaps, a subjective change in the artist's creative eye? But Chekhov was a master of objective vision, just as Turgenev had been at the time he wrote the *Sportsman's Sketches*. No, the peasant life itself was changing with every year of the decades following the emancipation (1861), decades witnessing the dissolution of Russian agriculture and the growth of industry. The Middle Ages were passing and with them the childish, primitive Christian soul of the people. No longer could the people be an object of worshiping veneration, and the intelligentsia had lost its habit of worship, at least ethical worship. Narodnichestvo was dying.

It is interesting to trace its last spasms. Without faith above, without object below, the descending Eros became transformed into



ethical nihilism or into the demoniac joy of falling. The abyss below was now attractive not only to L. Andreev with his "it is shameful to be good" (when others are bad). The last tragical masque of ethical Narodnichestvo can be seen in A. Blok. From the very beginning his Eros was a descending or a falling one—from the "Celestial Lady" to the "Twelve." Having lost faith and hope, the poet was conscious of the positive mystic value of the fall:

You must become yourself like a path,  
Must be as poor as the path is poor,  
Lie down-trodden in a ravine dark,  
Everything forsake, everything forget,  
And be as faded as withered grass.

These last survivals of Narodnichestvo, this time aesthetical reflections of the extinguished ethical fire, largely account for the acceptance of the October revolution by many of the Russian Symbolists. Revolution was an abyss. To accept it or to fall into it, to lose oneself in the lowest depths of life, forgetful of good and evil, that was the last word of the dying Narodnichestvo.

And now, that it is truly and definitely dead, it is time to appraise it honestly and justly and to weigh the balance. Its sins are obvious and many. Its contempt for culture threw Russia of the nineteenth century into a deadlock of beggarly provincialism. Its indifference towards freedom and the state accounts in a great measure for the failure of the Russian revolutionary movement. Contemporary "socialist" Russia is more than ever enslaved and poor, but the image of the humiliated Christ is gone. The beggars are dreaming a dream of America's fairy wealth.

Yes, it is true, the Agape, the descending love, is not the whole Christian gospel. The ascending Eros must elevate the personality as well as the whole historical culture of a nation. Narodnichestvo is guilty of forgetting the reality of the double sense of love. Thus it destroyed or helped to destroy state, freedom, and culture. And yet . . . Politics and culture do not exhaust the meaning of life, even of national life. There are depths of life inaccessible to a too reasonable consciousness. Christianity is a paradoxical religion which leads to resurrection through the cross. And Narodnichestvo reflects one of the fundamental dogmas of Christianity. It is easy and just to condemn Narodnichestvo in its political or cultural actions, but one must stand with reverence before its ethical attitude.

There is an outstanding Russian scholar and politician who all his life has been waging war against Narodnichestvo and who even dared to call it the syphilis of Russian culture. Be cautious! Lest beyond the Russian Narodniks, beyond Tolstoy, you strike at the whole line of Russian saints, at the millenarian ethical ideal of the Russian people, and at last, at Him who stands behind it—the Russian vision of the Kenotic Christ.

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## *The Angel*

By M. LERMONTOV

*Translated by Lascelle de Basily*

An angel in the mid-night sky  
Flew singing to the world on high,  
While moon and stars and clouds in throng  
All listened to this holy song.

He sang of sinless souls that rove  
At peace in heaven's sacred grove.  
Of God-Eternal, great and strong,  
His unfeigned praise rang out in song.

He bore a soul in his embrace  
For life upon this Earth's sad face.  
The Song, in that young soul enshrined,  
Dwelt living, wordless, undefined.

Throughout all life the young soul yearned.  
Sublime desires within him burned.  
That holy heaven-song at birth  
Could not be stilled by songs of Earth.

# The Lesson of Port Arthur

BY ALEXIS R. WIREN

THE origin of the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-05 can undoubtedly be traced to the part played by Russia in the settlement between China and Japan following their war of 1894-95. Prior to that time Japan had not been considered a country of sufficient military strength to deserve much attention. However, in 1894 the Russian military attaché in Japan, Colonel Vogak, reported: "Now I have no doubt whatsoever that in Japan we have a neighbor deserving full attention on our part. . . . I would not be surprised if within ten or fifteen years the Japanese army will become a first class one. . . . Having won a war against China, it will have no other objective than to measure its strength against a European country, and because of the very nature of the situation in the Far East, this country can only be Russia or England."

It is significant that realizing her inability to fight England and Russia simultaneously, Japan, through her special envoy, Marquis Ito, tried to establish an understanding with Russia. Failing in this, in 1902, Japan signed a defensive alliance with England, and shortly afterwards Russian representatives in Japan and Korea indicated their awareness of the gathering danger.

Although as early as 1900, a number of defensive measures were outlined and approved in Russia, including that of establishing a powerful naval force, many of these measures were never put into effect, partly because some of the highest officials felt that the greater the Russian efforts for military preparedness, the greater would become those of the possible enemy. As a result, only half-measures were taken for a long period of time and "all out" preparations for a possible war were only begun in January 1904. On the night of January 26, 1904, although there had been no declaration of war, a division of Japanese torpedo boats made a surprise attack upon the Russian fleet anchored in the outer harbor of Port Arthur.

In spite of the fact that this attack was launched upon ships which had their peace time lighting, and that the enemy was discovered only when they were less than two miles away, the Japanese torpedoes hit and damaged only two battleships and a cruiser. There is a strange parallel between this attack and the attack upon Pearl Harbor. On the morning of December 7, 1941, when airplanes were heard approaching Pearl Harbor, the report was not taken seriously

because of the belief that they were American planes. On the night of January 26, 1904, the Russian fleet in Port Arthur, expecting a practice torpedo attack that night, thought at first that the Japanese torpedo boats were Russian boats taking part in this practice attack.

Two Russian torpedo boats had been sent out on scout duty, carrying lights as customary in peace time. Two of the anchored ships were instructed to use search lights. True, the personnel of the fleet had been ordered to be back from shore leave by sunset, instead of the usual 10 P.M., but these orders were thought to have been given in expectation of the practice exercises scheduled for the morning of the 27.

The battleships "Tsesarevich" and "Retvizan" were anchored in a position most exposed to attack, and three-quarters of the fleet was placed so that most of its guns could not be used, for fear of hitting the fleets' own ships. This is one instance of how far were the thoughts of the authorities from the possibility of an undeclared attack.

The irony of this occasion lies also in the fact that the Commandant of the cruiser "Bayan," Captain R. Wiren,<sup>1</sup> had a few years earlier been in charge of the tactical war games conducted by the Navy Department in St. Petersburg. He had foreseen the likelihood of a surprise attack by the Japanese before a declaration of war could be known in Port Arthur and had instructed all ships, at the first sign of serious tension with Japan, to be ready for such an attack and to have anti-torpedo nets installed. In spite of his repeated requests that an order for the installation of torpedo nets be given, it was not carried out in time and had not been completed by the night of the attack.

At the time of Japan's unexpected attack, the Russian fleet at Port Arthur consisted of seven battleships, four cruisers, two light cruisers, four gunboats, three small light cruisers, and twenty-five torpedo boats. The Japanese fleet consisted of seven battleships, three coastal defense battleships, eight heavy cruisers, twenty-seven cruisers of smaller sizes, three gunboats, nineteen destroyers, and seventy-six torpedo boats of various sizes.

<sup>1</sup>The late Admiral Robert Wiren, father of the author of this article, was a distinguished naval officer whose courage and gallantry were well known. According to one of the survivors of the battle of March 31, 1904, mentioned in this article, the sailors of the sinking Russian torpedo boat, when they saw a cruiser coming to their rescue, shouted: "It's the 'Bayan,' Wiren will save us." For this battle Wiren received the highest Russian military decoration—the cross of St. George. He lost his life in March, 1917, when full Admiral of the Navy, Military Governor of the Fortress of Kronstadt, and in charge of the naval defenses of the Eastern Baltic. [Ed.]

The success of the Japanese land operations depended upon the ability of the fleet to destroy, or at least immobilize, the Russian fleet. Having failed to weaken the Russians by torpedo boat attacks, they subsequently tried to bottle up the Russian fleet by sinking suicide ships at the entrance to the inner harbor of Port Arthur. The first of the torpedo boat attacks was made on the night of February 12, 1904, but was successfully thwarted by the Russians with a loss of four Japanese ships and two torpedo boats. Further attempts of this kind were made by the enemy on the nights of March 14 and April 20, but again without success.

On the night of February 25, a feat of heroic gallantry took place. Six Russian torpedo boats went into action against a superior Japanese force. One of these torpedo boats, the "Stere-gushchi" (Watchful), had all of its crew killed or severely wounded, with the exception of two sailors who locked themselves in the hold and refused to surrender to a Japanese boarding party. When a Japanese torpedo boat took the "Stere-gushchi" in tow, the two sailors opened the sea cocks, sinking themselves with their ship, rather than have her become the prey of the Japanese.

On March 31, the Russian Navy suffered the great loss of the illustrious Vice-Admiral Makaroff who had only a short while before taken over the command of the fleet. The battleship "Petropavlovsk," Makaroff's flagship, struck a mine and sank with a loss of almost all of her officers and crew, including an official guest, the famous Russian painter Vereshchagin, whose battle pictures are considered among the best in the world.

On the morning of the same day the cruiser "Bayan" performed a feat which can be appreciated both by laymen and the expert. When a report was received that several Russian torpedo boats were being attacked by Japanese cruisers, Admiral Makaroff ordered his ships to put out to sea with all possible speed. The "Bayan" was about half an hour ahead of any other ship and found herself alone facing six Japanese cruisers, but managed to engage them in battle in order to save the crew of a sinking Russian torpedo boat. In her attempt to go to the rescue, the "Bayan" had attained a speed considerably in excess of the maximum trial speed which she had reached in the French ship yard at Toulon, where she had been built.

Minutes often determine the outcome of naval battles, and such was the case on July 28, 1904, when the Russian fleet attempted to change its base from Port Arthur to Vladivostok. The Russian and Japanese fleets met about twenty miles off Port Arthur. Some Russian ships had already succeeded in passing through the line of



the Japanese fleet, when a shell hit the Russian flagship "Tsesarevich," killing the commanding Admiral Witgeft and wounding all the officers in the battle station. At that moment the Japanese Admiral Togo, discovering that his fleet had suffered severe losses, gave a preliminary signal: "An order will follow," and was contemplating the withdrawal of his fleet. In the meantime, the command of the Russian fleet had passed to the next in rank, Admiral Ukhtomsky, who ordered four battleships, a cruiser, and some of the torpedo boats to turn back to Port Arthur. Other ships, while succeeding in passing through the blockade, never reached Vladivostok and were interned in different neutral ports. A British naval attaché, who was on Admiral Togo's flagship reported: "Because of three minutes, only three minutes, the Russian fleet failed to get through to Vladivostok."

After this fateful battle, the greatly reduced naval forces at Port Arthur had to do what they could to help defend the fortress. They dismounted their guns in order to place them on the shore batteries and transferred part of their crew to shore defense positions. On November 23, the Japanese forces occupied a mountain from which they could direct, with eleven inch guns, the shelling of the Russian ships, severely damaging most of them.

On the night of December 19, a conference was held by the defense council of Port Arthur. The council decided that in spite of heavy losses, Port Arthur probably could defend itself for another month. But before daybreak, General Stessel, Commander of the fortress, on his sole responsibility and without consulting other members of the defense council, sent his representative to the Japanese to offer surrender. In the meantime, six of the Russian torpedo boats managed to escape from Port Arthur; other ships, damaged and dismantled, had to be blown up. Thus, instead of being a base for naval operations so as to prevent a land offensive of the Japanese, the fortress of Port Arthur became the grave of the Russian fleet.

Port Arthur, after having been cut off and under siege for almost eight months, fell on December 20, 1904.<sup>2</sup> It was subsequently discovered that had the fortress continued its resistance a few days longer, the Japanese would have given up their efforts to take it.

Such were the tragic consequences of underestimating Japan's fighting strength, and the failure to take full advantage of all possible offensive as well as defensive measures.

<sup>2</sup>The original garrison of Port Arthur, including sailors, consisted of about 47,000 men. At the time of the surrender, Port Arthur had: "24,000 effective and slightly wounded and 15,000 wounded and sick men." See *Encyc. Brit.*, "Russo-Japanese War."

# John B. Turchin: Russian General in the American Civil War

BY ALBERT PARRY

## I

ON A night in June 1901, an aged, broken man died in a hospital for the insane in southern Illinois, and the next day the people of Chicago read in a front-page obituary: "Veterans of the civil war will recall with glistening eyes the deeds that made the old commander's brigade famous."<sup>1</sup> Another newspaper printed a portrait of a proud and determined-looking man in a uniform of the Union Army, with the caption: "Fighter Who Served Under Two Flags."<sup>2</sup>

The other flag was that of Tsarist Russia. For John Basil Turchin was born Ivan Vasilevich Turchaninoff,<sup>3</sup> and before changing his name and gaining fame as a brigadier general in Lincoln's forces he had attained the rank of colonel in the army of Nicholas I.

There were other Russians in the Union armies, but Turchin was the only one with the rank, adventures, and troubles of a general. Vladimir Magazinoff and some other sailors visiting America, deserted the Tsar's ships to enlist in the New York artillery and other units of the North. A Russian officer, Colonel Charles de Arnaud, took part in the campaign against the South from June 1861 to February 7, 1862, when he was wounded. Prince Alexander Eris-

<sup>1</sup>*The Chicago Post*, June 19, 1901.

<sup>2</sup>*The Chicago Tribune*, June 20, 1901.

<sup>3</sup>The publisher's preface to John B. Turchin's *Chickamauga* (Chicago, 1888) stated on page 5 that the General's original name was Turchinoff. *The Chicago Tribune* for February 6, 1886, wrote: "His family name was Turchinoff, but after emigrating to America he discovered that his name was too much for the average Yankee to tackle. By degrees, or rather by syllables, terse Americans had abbreviated the name of his forefathers until it was almost bereft of its identity. After each syllable had been chopped off until nothing was left but "Turch," the greatly annoyed Russian put an end to further abridgement by announcing for the convenience of his English speaking friends, he would cut off the tail, but he should draw the line of demarcation at Turchin."

toff arrived in New York in 1862 and fought with the North for the principles of progress and freedom, although he was the owner of a tremendous estate in his native Georgia in the Caucasus.<sup>4</sup> Eristoff eventually returned home, but another Russian-born Union soldier stayed in America till his death many years later. Otto Mears was his name. He was born in Courland, Russia, of non-Russian stock, but left his homeland as a boy for San Francisco, where he enlisted as a youth in the First California Volunteers and saw Civil War service in New Mexico, and later became a well-known pioneer and road-builder of Colorado.<sup>5</sup>

But most of the fighting records of these volunteers were either brief or obscure. To this category belongs Prince Eristoff's. Some, like Mears, although coming to this land with no knowledge of English, were too young to remember for long either their Russian origin or their native tongue. To a historian, they are only technically Russians.

Turchin thus remains the best example of Russia's contribution to America's military effort. He was a soldier, not a mere boy, when he first came here. Affectionately and otherwise, he was known as the Mad Cossack (long before he actually went mad), and there was no mistaking him for anything but a Russian. Above all, he left behind him voluminous data, making his record in America a clear enough story of competent leadership, of daring and sacrifice, of pain and glory.

We have no direct evidence that Turchin was a Cossack, but it is certain that he was born in the province of the Don, on January 30, 1822. His father was a major in the regular army, a nobleman of well-off circumstances. After three years of elementary schooling, young Ivan was sent for three more years to a *gymnasiya* in Novocherkassk, from which, according to one account, he entered the artillery academy in St. Petersburg. Another version has it that upon completing his preliminary education the boy entered a cadet-school in St. Petersburg, from which—and not from the artillery academy—he was graduated in 1841 into the horse artillery service of the Tsar. He was nineteen, and an ensign. His schooling by then had included mathematics, gunnery, engineering, ballistics, military tactics, and mechanics, both theoretical and practical. He took part in the

<sup>4</sup>For information on Magazinoﬀ, de Arnaud, and Prince Eristoff I am indebted to my friend Alexander Tarsaidzé and the manuscript of his forthcoming book, *Tsars and Presidents* (in collaboration with Roger Dow). Incidentally, Mr. Tarsaidzé is a grandnephew of Prince Eristoff.

<sup>5</sup>*Dictionary of American Biography*, Vol. XII, New York, 1933, pp. 485-86.

Hungarian campaign of 1848-49, and upon his return entered the military academy for the general staff, "where he received a thorough training in advanced tactics, military history of campaigns, topography and geodesy, military statistics, and military administration, graduating with high honors in 1852 and receiving as a reward of merit the silver medal, which is presented to graduates passing the highest examination."<sup>6</sup> It was then, at the age of thirty, that Turchin was appointed to the staff of the Imperial Guards "as sub-captain," and within a few years was promoted first to captain, then to colonel.<sup>7</sup>

It appears that he attained the rank of colonel in the Crimean War of 1854-56.<sup>8</sup> In March 1854, in company with a naval officer, Turchin was sent to survey the coast of the Gulf of Finland between St. Petersburg and Narva to see whether the British and the French could land their forces there in order to march on the Tsar's capital. He suggested fortifications and other measures, and his recommendations were adopted. Later in the war, Turchin was sent with a reserve army to Poland, for an Austrian invasion was seriously feared. The end of the war found him there, restless and dissatisfied. He was ordered to Moscow, to prepare quarters for the troops coming to the old capital for the coronation of Alexander II. Instead, he reported ill and obtained a year's leave. The spa of Marienbad in Austria was supposed to be his destination, but it was to England that Turchin and his young wife went. From there, in the summer of 1856, the pair sailed for the United States, arriving in New York in mid August.

Why did Turchin leave Russia, never to come back? A Chicagoan, who wrote while Turchin was still alive, had this explanation to offer:

During the long campaign in Poland, Colonel Turchin had grown tired of military service under the Russian Government, and had resolved to cut away from it at the earliest opportunity. Although at that time he had never crossed the Russian borders, he had read and heard a great deal of the land of freedom on the other side of the world, and the more he read and heard the more eager he became to leave the land of tyranny and despotic rule. To do this meant to abandon the brilliant career which was open to him; but freedom of thought, freedom of speech, freedom of action were looked upon as of far greater importance than all the honors and military distinguishment which a capricious Czar might heap upon a service subject.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>6</sup>*The Chicago Tribune*, February 6, 1886.

<sup>7</sup>Turchin, *Chickamauga*, p. 5.

<sup>8</sup>*The New York Tribune*, June 20, 1901.

<sup>9</sup>*The Chicago Tribune*, February 6, 1886.

This was a time of unrest among the young men of Russia, yet there was hope, too, that the new Tsar would begin to institute reforms, as indeed he soon did. Turchin's reason for going abroad was, it would seem, not only a lofty thought of liberty but also a lusty desire for adventures.

He and his wife knew several languages, but no English. They had some money, however, Madame Turchin being the possessor of a small fortune, and with this they bought a farm on Long Island, some thirty-five miles from Brooklyn. A year later the newcomer felt that he knew the language well enough to venture upon new horizons. Selling the farm, the Turchins moved to Philadelphia where John enrolled in a college of engineering. Through one of the teachers he met Alexander D. Bache, great-grandson of Benjamin Franklin, and superintendent of the United States Coast Survey. Bache liked the Russian's writings on scientific subjects, and for a time Turchin worked for him—at little or no compensation, due to Congressional reluctance to grant Bache additional funds.<sup>10</sup>

Work in private employment appeared to offer better terms. Tales of the West with its wider opportunities and a more exciting way of life attracted the Russian couple. In 1858 they moved to Mattoon, Illinois, an up-and-coming town of 150 buildings with many more on blueprints. Turchin was engaged as an architect to help with the new construction. His Americanization was rapid, and he joined the newly formed Republican Party, remaining a zealous member till his death decades later. In 1859 Turchin took his wife to the young, raw, sprawling, bustling city of Chicago where he accepted the position of a topographical engineer with the prosperous and evergrowing Illinois Central Railroad.<sup>11</sup>

In those days it was natural for army men to alternate between military service and pioneering work on railroads. Transport by rail was as yet too new to develop schools of its own, while army officers had enough knowledge of topography and machinery to be enticed from their service to build and run the novel iron-horse.<sup>12</sup> The Illinois Central had on its staff several men of military training and future fame, among them the man who within a few years was to

<sup>10</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>11</sup>*The National Cyclopaedia of American Biography*, Vol. XII, New York, 1904, p. 241.

<sup>12</sup>The St. Petersburg-Moscow railroad, completed a few years before the Crimean War, was built by that half-forgotten American army man and railroad-expert, Major George Washington Whistler, father of the famous painter. See Albert Parry, *Whistler's Father*, New York and Indianapolis, 1939.



emerge as one of the most talked-of leaders of American arms—Major General George B. McClellan. Indeed, there may be some connection between Turchin's coming to work for the Illinois Central and the fact that in 1855 McClellan had been sent to Russia by the United States War Department to study the lessons of the Crimean War.<sup>13</sup>

Turchin was later to recall the long conversations on the art of war he and McClellan used to hold in the offices of the Illinois Central where the Russian found the American as the chief engineer and vice-president of the railroad. Later, General Nathaniel P. Banks took McClellan's post with the road, and Turchin and Banks would discuss military problems for hours on end. All three were soon to find themselves on America's battlefields, putting to practical test some of their pet theories.

## II

In April 1861 the news of firing on Fort Sumter reached the streets and prairies of the Middle West. Chicago buzzed with talk and indignation. Nathaniel Banks burst into the Illinois Central offices shouting that an army of one million men would have to be raised at once to push the rebels into the Gulf of Mexico. Taking down from the walls their maps of the United States, he and Turchin planned the campaign, while, outside, volunteers thronged the armories, regiments were formed, and commanders sought for.

On May 16 Banks departed, having obtained his commission as a major general. Meantime the Nineteenth Illinois Volunteers heard from Joseph R. Scott, their commander, that he was willing to step aside in favor of a more experienced officer. A deputation waited on Turchin, and he accepted immediately. On June 17, 1861, he received his official commission as a colonel in the United States service, to lead the Nineteenth Illinois. Scott remained with him as his lieutenant colonel.

Portraits of Turchin at this time of his life show a broad Slavic face, with intense eyes, hair beginning to recede into a high forehead, and a moustache and beard of moderate proportions. His admirers were to remember this "flaxen-haired Russian" as a man of "a striking physiognomy," whose photographs generally failed "to reflect the fire of his pale-blue eyes and the intellectual cast of features that characterize this distinguished soldier."<sup>14</sup>

<sup>13</sup>*Dictionary of American Biography*, Vol. IX, New York, 1933, pp. 581-82.

<sup>14</sup>*The Chicago Tribune*, February 6, 1886.

At Camp Long near Chicago, where Turchin joined his new regiment, he found over one thousand officers and men of the Nineteenth formed into ten companies. Six companies were made up of Chicago men, many of whom were sons of the city's best families. Four companies were composed of men from all over Illinois, with a number of sturdy farmers from the northern counties. Some of the companies had been drilled for years and had known war service for months, for they were part of such old-time organizations as the Highland Guards, Chicago Zouaves, and other groups of citizens who had believed in preparedness ever since the late eighteen fifties and had been in the active army since the fateful April, 1861. Turchin had good material to begin with, and now he told these men that their regiment was to become the best in the United States. Drill and more drill was the order of the day until, on July 12, 1861, the Nineteenth struck its tents and marched through the cheering crowds of Chicago to the depot. Mrs. Turchin accompanied her husband.

The first assignment was to Quincy, whence Turchin's men crossed the Mississippi River to the Missouri towns of Palmyra and Hannibal. There were to relieve the Twenty-first Illinois, then commanded by an obscure colonel named Ulysses S. Grant. Here Turchin had his first tiff with his superior, Brigadier General Stephen A. Hurlbut. He complained of the lack of uniforms and munitions, and would not fight until these arrived. Hurlbut stormed, but Turchin was obstinate and got what he wanted. From then on, Turchin's regiment guarded railroad bridges and struck at secessionists in the region, chasing away their newly formed units, destroying their barracks and seizing their provisions, organizing loyal citizens into home guards, and otherwise behaving "in the best possible manner."<sup>15</sup> Brigadier General John Pope, Hurlbut's chief, came to Palmyra to threaten the Russian with court-martial for allowing his soldiers to molest citizens' property, but Turchin protested that they took provisions only, as the food furnished his troops was of "the rankest kind"—nothing but "wormy hardtack and execrable salt junk."<sup>16</sup>

The regiment was next moved to St. Louis, then to Kentucky. It searched for the enemy, and it drilled. Mrs. Turchin was with the troops, as usual. In mid September orders came to entrain for Washington, to join the Army of the Potomac—but the Nineteenth never

<sup>15</sup>J. Henry Haynie, ed., *The Nineteenth Illinois; a memoir of a regiment of volunteer infantry famous in the Civil War of fifty years ago for its drill, bravery, and distinguished services*, Chicago, 1912, p. 140.

<sup>16</sup>*The Chicago Tribune*, February 6, 1886.

arrived. On the night of the seventeenth, in two trains, the regiment was crossing a bridge beyond Vincennes, Indiana, when the structure crashed under the weight of the second train. Six cars fell into the river; twenty-five men, including a captain, were killed; 105 others were injured, seven of them dying soon afterward in the hospitals of Cincinnati, and a few remaining crippled for life. Company I, mostly men from Galena, known as "anti-Beauregardists," suffered most. The Colonel and his lady labored with the rescue crews, he chopping with an axe the car-frames to release the crushed men, she tearing her skirts into bandages and ministering to the wounded. At a subsequent meeting of the citizens of Galena, the mayor of that city, Robert Brand, reporting on the accident, exclaimed that "when the dead, dying and mutilated lay in one mass of ruin; when the bravest heart was appalled, and all was dismay, this brave woman was in the water, rescuing the mangled from a watery grave . . . , a fit consort for the brave Turchin in leading the gallant sons of Illinois to battle!"<sup>17</sup> The Colonel himself was sad: "I am an old soldier, but never in my life have I felt so wretched as when I saw, by moonlight, my dear comrades on the miserable pile of rubbish . . . and heard the groans of agony."<sup>18</sup>

In Cincinnati, in Louisville, and finally in Elizabethtown, Kentucky, the regiment nursed its wounds and received new munitions and recruits. Among the latter there was a certain Alexander Smirnoff of Ottawa, Illinois, who had enlisted on September 25.<sup>19</sup> A Russian, judging by his name, he was perhaps attracted by his compatriot's fame and wished to serve under him while fighting for the Union.

Elizabethtown was semi-rebel, semi-loyal, and it was the job of the Nineteenth to bring the town and vicinity more firmly into the camp of the Stars and Stripes, while improving its own training. "Here we remained," wrote the historian of the regiment, ". . . securing information as to the manual of arms, guard mounting, picket duty, and battalion movements. Verily, Colonel Turchin and his subordinate officers were an energetic group of leaders."<sup>20</sup> On the press of *The Elizabethtown Democrat*, whose owners had conveniently fled, Turchin's men published *The Zouave Gazette*, to

<sup>17</sup>A. T. Andreas, *History of Chicago, from the Earliest Period to the Present*, Vol. II, Chicago, 1885, p. 181.

<sup>18</sup>J. Seymour Currey, *Chicago: Its History and Its Builders*, Vol. II, Chicago, 1912, pp. 110-11.

<sup>19</sup>Haynie, *The Nineteenth Illinois*, p. 93.

<sup>20</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 146.

which the Colonel himself contributed his sensible proclamations to the populace, also his articles for the soldiers on outpost duties, regimental bands, bugle signals, and other matters. William B. Redfield of *The Chicago Evening Journal* edited this unique paper, published "as often as circumstances will permit" (actually, every seven or eight days). The *Gazette* was full of lively items, and it sold briskly in camp and town and even in Louisville. Two Pennsylvania regiments, stationed near by, regularly bought several hundred copies.<sup>21</sup>

It was at this time that Turchin wrote and published a pamphlet entitled *Brigade Drill*, said to be the best of its kind since the old *Scott's Tactics*. The fame of Turchin's drill was spreading steadily, and citizens of Elizabethtown, both unionists and secessionists, but particularly young women, came to the grounds to marvel at the men's smart maneuvers. Turchin's "Russian methods, crossed with American patriotism, soon made that regiment a shining light of discipline and efficiency."<sup>22</sup> On his visit to the town in November, Turchin's new commander, Brigadier General Don Carlos Buell, was much impressed with what the Russian had done, saying to the Colonel: "I have never seen a better drilled regiment than yours."<sup>23</sup> A West Pointer, Buell was a stickler for drill and discipline.

Soon afterward, without raising him in rank, Buell gave Turchin a brigade. This was the Eighth Brigade, Army of the Ohio, under the divisional command of Brigadier General Ormsby M. Mitchell. Turchin, still a colonel, now led four regiments: Nineteenth and Twenty-fourth Illinois, Eighteenth Ohio, and Thirty-seventh Indiana, all infantry. Occasionally he had the use also of some artillery and cavalry. From December to February the brigade was at Camp John Quincy Adams, at Bacon Creek in Kentucky, and a rainy, miserable winter it turned out to be—for many, their first winter under canvas. There were long weeks of inaction, and illness was rife.

On February 10, 1862, Buell's army began to move southward, Turchin's brigade in the vanguard. Due to Grant's victories at Forts Henry and Donelson, the rebels under General Albert Sidney Johnston were in retreat before Buell. They were burning supplies and breaking bridges to hamper the Northerners, but, thanks to

<sup>21</sup>Copies of *The Zouave Gazette*, October-November 1861, are extremely rare now. I am grateful to the Chicago Historical Society for the opportunity to consult the first four issues of the *Gazette* in its possession.

<sup>22</sup>*The Chicago Record-Herald*, June 20, 1901.

<sup>23</sup>Haynie, *The Nineteenth Illinois*, p. 159.

Turchin's use of a big flat-bottom ferry which his scouts had found near an old flour-mill, the Nineteenth was the first to enter Bowling Green and seize much booty. Crossing into Tennessee, Mitchel's division, with Turchin's brigade still one of its most active parts, occupied Nashville late in February and Murfreesboro on the twentieth of March. Bridge building and skirmishes kept the brigade busy, and Turchin found time to offer to General Buell what the Colonel's admirers termed "most valuable strategical advice at Corinth."<sup>24</sup> Mrs. Turchin helped in the wagon ambulance, contributed by the grateful citizens of Chicago, and there is this memento of her work decades later: "Dear Madame Turchin! how we all respected, believed in, and came to love her for her bravery, gentleness and constant care of the sick and wounded. . . ."<sup>25</sup>

Early in April, while Grant (by now, of course, a general) fought and retreated at Shiloh; and while Buell and Grant drove the rebels back to Corinth, Turchin's brigade was sent over the tortuous roads to seize Huntsville in Alabama and thus cut the Confederates off from their direct communications with the east and southeast. The raid was a complete success, and Turchin was praised for it. He was now sure of promotion in rank, but before he could receive this honor an unpleasant thing happened.

The Eighteenth Ohio had been left by Turchin in occupation of Athens, Alabama, and early in May the regiment was overwhelmed by a rebel force. It was claimed that the rebels treated the Ohioans most savagely, taking few prisoners but shooting nearly all who fell into their hands. Outraged by the news, Turchin hastened to Athens with the bulk of the brigade, met on the road the retreating survivors of the Ohio regiment, and together with them retook the town. The annalist of the Nineteenth admitted: "In the midst of the confusion that accompanied and followed this affair some unsoldierly things were done by men of the brigade."<sup>26</sup> Some excused the retaliation by saying that the inhabitants of Athens had sniped at the Ohioans during their retreat and had abused them in other ways, too; and that anyway the reports of revenge by the brigade upon its return were grossly exaggerated. There was, for instance, no rape of the inmates of a female seminary near Athens, as charged at the time by the secessionists.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>24</sup>*The Chicago Record-Herald*, June 20, 1901.

<sup>25</sup>Haynie, *The Nineteenth Illinois*, p. 132.

<sup>26</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 166.

<sup>27</sup>T. M. Eddy, *The Patriotism of Illinois, a record of the civil and military history of the state in the War for the Union*, Vol. I, Chicago, 1865, p. 336.



Complaints reached General Mitchel that Athens had been sacked by the Mad Cossack's troops, and Turchin's superior hurried to the scene. Mitchel addressed the town folk, bidding them to organize a committee of inquiry. Turchin was to make an investigation of his own. When the reports were in, no charges were preferred. "General Mitchel was satisfied, but not so General Buell. . . Urged by field officers who were probably jealous of the 'Russian,' Buell caused Turchin to be placed under arrest, and a court-martial was appointed to try him."<sup>28</sup>

### III

General James A. Garfield (later President of the United States) headed the court-martial which met in July, first in Athens and later in Huntsville. According to a newspaper account of the time, the main accusation was that Turchin "gave a silent consent to the perpetration of a series of outrages in which persons and property were alike disrespected." Neglect of duty, conduct unbecoming an officer and gentleman, and disobedience of orders were the three official counts against him. The charges described Turchin's soldiers as "Pillaging houses, plundering stores, forcing trunks, iron safes and wardrobes, destroying thousands of dollars in notes on hand, burning goods, carrying off silver plate and jewelry, watches and money, and last of all, committing an indecent outrage on the persons of two servant girls." Turchin himself "contracted debts and refused to liquidate them," also would not "enforce his authority" to prevent his troops from evil-doing, and disobeyed orders from the headquarters "in allowing the village to be plundered."<sup>29</sup>

Turchin pleaded not guilty to all the allegations except one—and that was the charge that contrary to regulations he allowed his wife to be with him at the front. Great crowds were attracted to the court rooms by the trial, and while certain persons were reported to be full of hatred for the Russian and eager to hear him judged guilty, others—especially his soldiers—were dismayed by the proceedings and muttered darkly. They said that Turchin was being tried by pro-slavery men for his anti-slavery sentiments. They were incensed when the court at last reached its verdict. It was a verdict of guilty and a sentence of dismissal from the United States Army.

During the trial, and while the findings of the court were on their way to Washington for confirmation, a section of the American press

<sup>28</sup>Haynie, *The Nineteenth Illinois*, p. 167.

<sup>29</sup>Correspondence from Athens, Alabama, to *The Cincinnati Gazette*, July 13, 1862, quoted in *The Chicago Tribune*, July 25, 1862.

shared the soldiers' feelings. *The Nashville Union* was quoted by *The Chicago Tribune* on August 2 that, because of the time taken by Garfield, Buell, and others to try Turchin, the very deliverance of East Tennessee from the rebels was being postponed—these generals were too busy judging the Colonel to fight the Confederacy! *The Chicago Tribune* thundered on August 2, 1862:

Turchin's offense consists in believing that peace and war cannot be carried on successfully at the same time and place. He is not the man to allow his soldiers to die of scurvy for want of vegetables while guarding the onion patch of a traitor, and it does not lie in the boots of Don Carlos Buell to restrain him from hitting a rebel's head wherever he sees it.

In another editorial, on August 8, *The Chicago Tribune* applauded "the noble conduct of Colonel Turchin at his trial, his dignity, patience, his soldierly and manly bearing throughout." It echoed Turchin's words: "We hope that court-martial has not been altogether in vain." The editor called upon President Lincoln and the War Department to meet the court's sentence with proper indignation. He was supremely confident that the sentence would be reversed.

Meanwhile, President Lincoln and his War Department had their answer ready. The news was most surprising to all and extremely pleasing to Turchin and his friends: it was a commission promoting the Russian to the rank of brigadier general!

Dated July 17, 1862, it coincided with the sittings of the court-martial. Made public after the sentence had been sent to Washington for confirmation, it had the effect of vindicating or at least forgiving Turchin. Officially, it was his reward for the capture of Huntsville. Now that he was promoted, Turchin's condemnation by a court-martial had to be set aside, for most of his judges sitting under General Garfield were colonels, who certainly could not judge a brigadier general.

His wife had gone back to Chicago, and now Turchin journeyed to rejoin her. Thousands of citizens accompanied Mrs. Turchin to the depot to meet the vindicated hero. They greeted the Russian with a tremendous ovation, and took him to Brand Hall, where they "tendered him such a reception that all doubts were set at rest as to what Chicago people thought of Buell's treatment" meted out to their man.<sup>30</sup>

Turchin's triumph was complete.

<sup>30</sup>*The Chicago Tribune*, February 6, 1886.

IV

Yet, he remained away from the major battlefields of the Republic for quite a few months. Possibly he did not want to return while his enemy Buell was still in charge.

But from October 1 to 8, the battle of Perryville was fought and lost by Buell—lost in the sense that he needlessly permitted General Bragg's Confederates to slip from his grip. For this Buell was dismissed in favor of Major General William S. Rosecrans. A thorough reorganization of the Army of the Ohio followed, and presently it became the Army of the Cumberland led by new commanders. Late in December and early in January it met the rebels in the bloody battle of Stone River, which both sides claimed as a victory but which actually ended in the Southerners' withdrawal. The Nineteenth Illinois distinguished itself in the battle, but among the fallen was Colonel Scott, Turchin's friend and successor as head of the regiment. Scott was seriously wounded while leading his men in a charge. Taken back to Chicago, he never recovered, dying months later, in July. There is a mention of General Turchin's part in the battle of Stone River,<sup>31</sup> but this seems to be in error. In fact, it was not until March 1863 that Turchin rejoined the forces in action.

Rosecrans first offered Turchin the Second Division of cavalry in the Army of the Cumberland, but Turchin said he disliked leading mounted men—a strange bias in a man born among Cossacks, if not a Cossack himself! Instead he took the Third Brigade of the Fourth Division. He found in his command the Eleventh, Thirty-sixth, Eighty-ninth, and Ninety-second Ohio, and the Eighteenth Kentucky regiments of infantry. Neither the famous Nineteenth nor any other Illinois regiment was now under him, but the troops from his state continued to follow his fortunes and cheer his name.

In later years Turchin was wont to consider 1863 as the turning point of the entire Civil War. His own outstanding share in that year of decision, he felt, had been in the battle of Chickamauga on September 19-20 and of Missionary Ridge on November 25, the two victories which gave to the Union the final control of Chattanooga and Knoxville.

At Chickamauga, General Turchin initiated bold bayonet charges. On one occasion, in a headlong charge, Turchin's "impetuosity carried him far into the rebel lines, and he was almost instantly surrounded by the rebel hordes, but the stout old Russian had no thought of surrendering." He turned back to the Federal lines, cutting

<sup>31</sup>*The National Cyclopaedia of American Biography*, Vol. XII, p. 241.

through with his men and "actually bringing with him three hundred prisoners."<sup>32</sup> He led not only his brigade but gave advice and encouragement to other troops. His horse was shot from under him, and he ran through a stubble-field signaling to his troops. He cursed other generals, particularly when one of them, James B. Steedman, borrowed the Eighty-ninth Ohio from Turchin and left a number of these soldiers, together with some of his own, to be surrounded and captured by the rebels. It was at Chickamauga, on the second day of the battle, that Alexander Smirnoff was killed. In the two years since his enlistment this Russian soldier had been promoted to corporal and sergeant, all in the same Company C, Nineteenth Illinois, which at Chickamauga fought outside Turchin's brigade but close by.

At Missionary Ridge, Turchin led his units in scaling the height. He was at the extreme and thus most strategic left of the storming line. Nine guns were captured, and the rebels were pushed north even before other brigades could come to Turchin's aid.

The victory of Missionary Ridge opened Sherman's way to Atlanta. In that famous march to the sea, Turchin fought as far as the Chattahoochee River, six miles within sight of the Atlantic Ocean. In years to come he was recognized as one of the leaders in that particular campaign.<sup>33</sup> In May 1864, realizing that the three-year term of enlistment of the Nineteenth was drawing to its close, and the regiment was soon to be disbanded, he asked for its transfer to his brigade. His men said that he thus wished to show his abiding love for the men of the Nineteenth. By that time, only fifteen officers and 239 men remained in the regiment. In addition to the Nineteenth, Turchin's brigade in its last phase held the Twenty-fourth Illinois, the Eighty-second Indiana, Twenty-third Missouri, and Eleventh, Seventeenth, Thirty-first, Eighty-ninth, and Ninety-second Ohio, altogether nine regiments.

The Nineteenth was mustered out in June 1864, and those men who did not re-enlist to serve in other regiments were taken by train back to Chicago. In the same summer Turchin suffered a sunstroke, and went home on a leave of absence, "during which time, seeing that the Confederacy was going to splinters, he resigned his commission."<sup>34</sup> The exact date of his retirement was October 4, 1864.

<sup>32</sup>Eddy, *The Patriotism of Illinois*, Vol. II, Chicago, 1866, p. 51.

<sup>33</sup>Turchin's photograph appears in the group of "prominent leaders in the Army of the Cumberland and the Tennessee in Sherman's masterly movement to the heart of Georgia," published in Francis T. Miller, ed., *The Photographic History of the Civil War*, Vol. X, New York, 1911, p. 91.

<sup>34</sup>*The Chicago Tribune*, February 6, 1886.

He was forty-two years old, and full of vigor. To quote a description given of him at the time:

General Turchin is a man of medium stature and strong frame, slightly inclined to corpulence, with a massive well-formed head, and a face full of intelligence. His countenance is very expressive and betokens the union of a rare and delicate humor with great inflexibility of will and decision of purpose. He is impulsive, full of energy, thinks and acts quickly, and is rarely placed in that position where he cannot muster resources to meet its emergencies.<sup>35</sup>

V

Settled in Chicago with his wife once more, Turchin announced that he intended to be useful to his adopted country by reviewing the errors he had seen in the army. "If our language is sometimes harsh or cutting," he warned, "our intentions are honest, and we hope that our pamphlets will be patiently perused by the public." He thus prefaced his first pamphlet, in which he took to task Generals McClellan, Buell, and even Sherman; lamented the supply organization in the Union Army; discussed politicians and the army; drew comparisons between the emancipated negro and the Russian serf; and proposed a way of dealing with the "possible interference of England and France."<sup>36</sup>

But pamphleteering and writing in general did not take all of Turchin's time. He kept himself busy as a solicitor of patents until 1870 and then turned back to his old profession of engineering. Two years after the great fire he decided to move to the countryside, and so, in 1873, proposed this deal to the Illinois Central: he would establish a Polish colony in the southern part of the state, in Washington County, on some barren lands belonging to the railroad. The plan was accepted, and the General advertised among the Poles of Chicago, Detroit, and other Midwestern cities, tempting them with surcease from their factory labors. At a point 300 miles south of Chicago, a station on the railroad was established and called Radom after the city in Poland. The lands around were covered with dense timber, and these were now cleared to make farms of forty and eighty acres each. By 1886, nearly 500 Polish families had built their houses in this region, log affairs with interior walls plastered with a mixture of clay and lime in the old-country style. Wheat was raised, and the station of Radom became a village of more than 100 inhabitants and two stores, two blacksmith shops, one saloon, one

<sup>35</sup>Eddy, *The Patriotism of Illinois*, Vol. I (1865), p. 340.

<sup>36</sup>John B. Turchin, *Military Rambles*, Chicago, 1865. Copies of this pamphlet are rare by now, as most of them very likely perished in the great Chicago fire of 1871. For this article I studied the copy owned by the Chicago Historical Society.



large frame church, and a solid-looking school. Two Catholic priests and two sisters of charity were the leaders of the community.

In compensation, Turchin received from the Illinois Central a farm of eighty acres, half a mile from the village. At first he tried to raise crops himself, but soon rented out the land, although continuing to live in his farm house. He read and he wrote, and played his violin which he said was a Brescia made by Gaspare de Salo, some 250 years earlier. Occasionally, the General and his lady rode to Chicago to see friends and deliver a lecture or two. In the press of the time we find, for instance, a notice of his appearance at the Central Music Hall in February 1886 to deliver a talk on "The Battle of Missionary Ridge." In November 1888, together with several other retired generals, Turchin was invited by the War Department to come to Chattanooga, thence to proceed to the old battlefield of Chickamauga, and help correct the Department's historic maps of the great battle by indicating the positions of the troops. He enjoyed the trip and work immensely. In the same year 1888, the Fergus Printing Company of Chicago published Turchin's *Chickamauga*, a book of nearly 300 pages and eight maps.<sup>37</sup>

In that valuable if acrimonious volume, also in his interviews with newspapermen, the grey and long-bearded but sprightly General berated his colleagues and superiors of a quarter-century back in no uncertain terms. His old friend McClellan was an indecisive and vacillating flounderer, a very good engineer who could never make a great general.<sup>38</sup> Of Banks, Turchin said that "he was one of the most cordial, generous and open-hearted men I have ever met," but that it was too bad Banks was consumed with an ambition to lead troops when "he would have made the best Commissary General of any man in the country."<sup>39</sup> General Henry W. Halleck, according to Turchin, was a mediocrity, an empty braggart, and intolerable in his conduct toward his subordinates.<sup>40</sup> He quoted others in praising his, Turchin's courage, but censured them for not mentioning the movements of his brigade often or correctly enough. He cited Russian folk proverbs, and he referred, by comparison, to the battles

<sup>37</sup>This was published as Volume I of the series entitled "Noted Battles for the Union during the Civil War in the United States of America, 1861-65," and an advertisement promised the following volumes by General Turchin: II. *Battle of Missionary Ridge*, III. *Experiences and Impressions during the War of the Rebellion*, and IV, *Sketches of Russia*. For reasons unknown, *Chickamauga* was the only volume of the series ever published.

<sup>38</sup>Turchin, *Chickamauga*, p. 13; *The Chicago Tribune*, February 6, 1886.

<sup>39</sup>*The Chicago Tribune*, February 6, 1886.

<sup>40</sup>*Chickamauga*, pp. 13-14 and 49.

of Borodino and Sevastopol, in discussing America's Civil War and just how it should have been properly fought. Of his own court-martial he reminisced in bitter and righteous words, placing himself among "a number of brigade and regimental commanders" who were arrested and tried on Buell's orders "presumptively for disorders committed by their troops, but really for the great offense, as it was then considered, of feeding some of those troops upon the resources of the enemy's country."<sup>41</sup> Food supplies of the Union Army were bad, he insisted, and he vowed that he would ten times rather have stood the result of a court-martial than to have permitted the men to starve.<sup>42</sup>

His former soldiers and other patriotic citizens applauded such statements, but here he was, nearing seventy and growing infirm, with no steady income for himself and his wife. He used his precious violin as a means of livelihood, playing at concerts in the small towns of southern Illinois. "We old fellows are back numbers," he said, "and must not expect too much." He kept silent about his poverty, and the Polish neighbors came to him with food and other help.

He roamed the fields and woods of Radom with his inevitable shotgun and cigarette, and from time to time flared up in fits of anger at the injustices of the world. He had indulged in land speculation which cost him his home, but, when this was foreclosed, the purchaser hesitated to move in, fearing the old man's temper. The buyer finally sold the place to a friend of the General who within a year took possession. Turchin then built a house similar to the first, within a few hundred yards, and with his wife lived there until his end.

Tales of his poverty reached Washington. Senator Joseph B. Foraker of Ohio had been a captain in Turchin's brigade, and General C. H. Grosvenor had also served under the Mad Cossack. Together these two began to agitate for a pension for Turchin, and finally Congress voted \$50 per month. But the years and troubles were weighing upon the General. Turchin's mind wavered, and one day he took his entire library out into the yard and built a fire with it. Neighbors tried to save some of the books, but with little success.<sup>43</sup>

<sup>41</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 12.

<sup>42</sup>*The Chicago Tribune*, February 6, 1886.

<sup>43</sup>Turchin's last years are described by me on the basis of the obituaries of June 1901. Most valuable help was also given to me by my friend and colleague of the University of Chicago days, James Monaghan, now of the staff of the Illinois State Historical Library at Springfield, Ill. Some years ago Mr. Monaghan visited Turchin's old home at Radom, photographed his houses, and interviewed his neighbors concerning the General's last days. Generously, Mr. Monaghan has shared with me his notes on those researches.

In April, 1901 he was taken to the State Hospital for the Insane, also known as the Southern Illinois Asylum, near Anna, Illinois, where Dr. Samuel Dodds ascribed the General's demented state to the sunstroke suffered on the march through Georgia in 1864. That was surely the foundation of Turchin's illness, said the good doctor patriotically. On the night of June 18, 1901, at the age of seventy-nine, the Mad Cossack of the Grand Army of the Republic died, survived by his wife, mourned by her and their many friends.

His body, draped in an American flag, was brought to the town of Anna and from there, escorted by members of the G.A.R., to the National Soldiers' Cemetery at Mounds City. "A gentleman of the best make," wrote the historian of the old Nineteenth.<sup>44</sup> "Fought for human liberty and for the eternal principle of the right," recalled the writer of an obituary.<sup>45</sup>

And by coincidence, yet as if to show that Russia could ever be expected to send some of her best sons to help America in her fight for, and understanding of, liberty and justice, a few days later—on June 21, to be exact—there arrived in Chicago a Russian professor named Maxim Maximovich Kovalevsky. He came to lecture at the new and fast-growing University of Chicago, and his way and stay were paid by Charles R. Crane—out of the profits Crane was then making by selling Westinghouse air-brakes and other necessary gadgets to the new and fast-growing industries of Russia.

<sup>44</sup>Haynie, *The Nineteenth Illinois*, p. 134.

<sup>45</sup>*The Chicago Record-Herald*, June 20, 1901.

# Twenty-Five Years of Russian Emigré Literature

By HELEN ISWOLSKY

## I

A FEW years before the present war, an exhibition of literary works written and published after the Revolution by the Russian exiles abroad was held at the Roerich Museum in Paris. Hundreds of books, pamphlets, reviews and newspapers filled the room, lined the walls, and were piled up on shelves and tables. Even for visitors unfamiliar with the difficulties and obstacles encountered both by the authors and publishers of these works, this display was impressive; it was a testimony of a continual and strenuous cultural effort on the part of Russian intellectuals abroad.

It has often been discussed whether Russian culture could continue to develop in exile. Certain critics have stressed the fact that the émigré intellectuals uprooted from their native soil cannot be expected to produce creative work; they must be considered exclusively as conservative forces guarding the vestiges of the past. Others, on the contrary, have pointed out that, freedom of expression being denied to literary circles inside Russia, it has been only abroad that Russian culture has had the chance of continuing independent creative work. Therefore, the writings of intellectual émigrés must be regarded as the only genuine expression of the Russian literary tradition.

Both these points of view reflect too great a spirit of partisanship to be convincing; yet each of them is not completely incorrect and contains a part of the truth. No doubt, for instance, that only a writer living on his native soil, breathing the air of his native country, can fully develop the characteristic, national elements of his talent. No doubt, moreover, that only an author who has shared the experience of revolution and of the deep transformations still going on in Russia, can speak of them "from the inside" and transmute them into genuine art. Yet, on the other hand, we know that the Soviet writer is handicapped by the ideological dictatorship to which he is submitted; he must obey the "social orders" and the directives of the

official "general line"; he is not free to create and lives in constant fear of censorship and purges. However gifted are certain Soviet writers, their productions rarely spring from the deep original sources of Russian literature. They bear too much the mark of the epoch and the stamp of state ideology.

If we turn to Russian literary production abroad, we witness the reverse: complete freedom of expression, such as was denied in pre-revolutionary Russia, and is still denied in a far higher degree in the Soviet Union, and on the other hand, the absence of an organic soil, of a national background, the drying up of the deep sources of original Russian inspiration; hence, the drifting of literary creation into shallower waters.

Yet, the very fact that from the first years of its tragic exile until today, the Russian intelligentsia abroad has continued to write and to publish, is a proof that there is still something organic in its survival. Were it not for this inner vitality, the Russian cultural centers abroad would have collapsed long ago under the burden of innumerable psychological and material difficulties. Not only have these cultural centers not collapsed, but they have accomplished considerable work, much of which is excellent. The writers and poets exiled from Russia have continued to create on foreign soil: Bunin, Kuprin, Remizov, Merezhkovsky, Shmelev, Aldanov, Vyacheslav Ivanov, Zinaida Hippus, Alexis Tolstoy, Khodassevich, Zaitsev, Tefy, Grebenshchikov, and many others did not give up their literary calling. Thanks to them, the extensive Russian press abroad has been amply provided during twenty-five years. And even now, when the European catastrophe has put an end to most of its activity—it is only in America that Russian émigré literature can still be published—we know from trustworthy sources that the Russian intelligentsia in Europe is pursuing its work in spite of great and often intolerable hardships.

It is also interesting to note that during these twenty-five years of exile, a new Russian literary generation has arisen abroad. Among the sixty-seven Russian émigré poets who have published their works during that period, only ten or twelve belong to the old school, while all the others represent new literary groups which have sprung into existence in Paris, Prague, Berlin, and the Far East, i.e., in all the important centers of Russian emigration. Among these young men, some of whom possess indubitable talent, many have published not only poems but also novels and short stories. In recent years this new school has produced quite a number of interesting works, while the older generation, particularly active during the first ten years of



exile, has now considerably slowed down its rhythm of creation. This is due to obvious reasons: most of the senior authors are handicapped by age and ill health, and there have been casualties amongst them: Khodassevich and Merezhkovsky died in Paris (the latter quite recently, in December 1941); Alexis Tolstoy has returned to Russia and has become a famous Soviet writer; Kuprin also returned to Soviet Russia a few years ago and died there in 1938.

## II

Russian literary forces in Europe, whether belonging to the older or the younger generation, were grouped around several reviews, the most important of which, *Sovremennyya Zapiski* [Contemporary Annals] was published in Paris. This periodical which was started in 1920 and appeared regularly until the eve of the French collapse, published the works both of the "senior" and "junior" school—novels, short stories, poems, criticism, as well as political, social, philosophical, and religious essays. Vadim Rudnev, the leading spirit of *Sovremennyya Zapiski*, who died in November 1940, after having fled from Paris on foot, was a typical representative of the Russian intelligentsia, disinterested, open-minded, devoted to the highest ideals of humanity and completely unselfish. The publishing of the review required endless sacrifices and an unceasing strenuous effort. It was thanks to Vadim Rudnev and his co-editors, N. Avksentiev, M. Vishnyak and Y. Fondaminsky, who also belong to the highly cultured and freedom-loving Russian élite, that all that is best in Russian émigré literature appeared on the pages of this remarkable publication.

Other periodicals and almanacs, such as *Tchisla* [Numbers] and *Krug* [Circle] were almost exclusively devoted to the works of the younger generation. Moreover, several publishing houses in Paris, Berlin, and even Harbin, published Russian prose and poetry, and the Russian branch of the American Y.M.C.A. press in Paris did much to promote Russian literature abroad. Notwithstanding the encouragement and aid offered by various cultural organizations, the Russian literary emigration has known great hardships. It is one of its exceptional merits to have continued its creative work in spite of these difficulties and to have remained true to its calling, instead of seeking a more lucrative occupation or letting itself be overwhelmed by misfortunes.

## III

As we have seen, Russian literary works abroad can be divided into two categories: the works of the older generation, uprooted from

Russia, yet still closely linked to the former Moscow or St. Petersburg literary world and having preserved its atmosphere; and the works of the new, "Western" school of young writers and poets. We call it the "Western" school, not because it has consciously abandoned purely Russian traditions and adhered to West European culture, but because it is both intellectually and geographically situated in the West European milieu (except for the small Harbin, Far Eastern group); it has therefore inevitably been submitted to the influence of Western literature, especially to that of the modern French and English masters.

This new, "Western" school has also—and this is natural enough—a less clear and vivid reminiscence of Russia than that which their elders have retained. The young writers are still in many ways typically Russian; but they do not breathe that acute melancholy, that burning nostalgia so characteristic of the senior school, whose representatives still vibrate to the voice of their lost homeland, and shall ever continue to do so. The young authors we shall have to deal with are "citizens of the world," born in one country, bred and educated in another. Even those who spent their childhood or youth in Russia have undergone too many foreign influences, have seen too many lands, and roamed through too many cities to preserve a unique attachment to a soil they have trodden long ago. Many have not even known this soil and have only learnt about it from their families or out of books.

On the contrary, the memory of Russia forms the keynote of the works produced by the older generation. Its representatives still live exclusively by this memory; they long to see once more their native land and fear lest its image should be dimmed or forgotten. Ivan Bunin, who is the most prominent writer of this group and who today is internationally famous, is a typical example of this deep, poignant attachment. His great novels written abroad, such as *Mitya's Love*, *The Life of Arsenev*, *Lika*, and his numerous short stories reflect Russian landscapes and Russian life with an extraordinary vividness of color and outline. In one of these stories, "Timeless Spring," the author himself explains to us the secret of his creative power. He relates his visit to an old country-mansion standing in a great wood in the vicinity of Moscow. This visit takes place at the beginning of the Revolution, after the owners have been expelled and the mansion has been turned into a museum; its halls and reception rooms stand empty, its church built by Italian architects under Catherine the Great is cold and deserted; and the "blue-eyed ancestors" of

the picture-gallery gaze silently at the lonely visitor. And Bunin writes:

Those old, old woods, that old, old mansion. . . . They led me into the world of the dead. . . . And now I continually behold that sunny kingdom of summer days, the forest and the great mansion plunged in an enchanted sleep, lost in the forest; the gates with the stone lions and wild shrubs; the sombre pine-clad gorges; the shallow ponds, the swarms of blue-birds on the grassy banks, the lake covered with rushes, the for ever deserted church, the empty halls full of splendor, where hang the portraits of the dead. . . . I cannot express the extraordinary feeling which I still experience: how terribly alive all this is to me!

Indeed, for Bunin that Russia of long ago is still "terribly alive"; and he goes on to say that he has almost completely detached himself from the world he is living in at present, in order to dwell in that enchanted past:

I am immersed in that other world, to which I was linked not only during all my life, not only since childhood, babyhood and birth, but even before birth; I am immersed in the Elyseum of my memories and visions, in a dream which is like that vivid and colorful life perpetuated by the blue-eyed dead in that empty mansion in the woods near Moscow.

We have quoted these lines, because they seem indeed to offer the key to Bunin's great art. His descriptions of men and landscapes, and even of psychological moods and human tragedy (as, for instance, Mitya's unhappy love and suicide) are not mere recollections; they are a mysterious resurrection of the past, they are day-dreams fixed by the pen of a great master; they recreate life *exactly as it was*, with its dimensions of time and space, its sounds and colors, its very atmosphere and odor. This atmosphere, for instance, is strongly felt in "Rusya," another short story by Bunin, recently published in America.<sup>1</sup> It is the tale of a provincial love-affair, which would have been quite common-place and even trivial, were it not for the landscape which forms its background: the dark summer-sky with a strip of yellow which still glows long after the sun has set; a swarm of dragon-flies hovering over the pond where the lovers meet, those peculiar dragon-flies which, as the author relates, are "uncanny," because "they fly continually, even by night."

One might quote whole pages of Bunin's novels where this strange past which cannot die, is conjured up and becomes more alive and more true than the world which lies immediately before our eyes. And, thanks to his great gift, Bunin has been able to write during these years of exile a remarkable chronicle of Russian life. Much of

<sup>1</sup>Novyi Zhurnal, New York, Vol. I, No. 1, 1942.

his writing is autobiographical, and his descriptions of his native town of Orel and of the Russian country belong to the best pages of classical Russian literature. Had Bunin not been "uprooted," had he not known the pang of separation and exile, he would perhaps never have attained these heights of retrospective vision. Though, of course, even before his exile, he was one of Russia's most remarkable writers.

This resurrection of the past is typical of many other authors belonging to the old school, though few of them can rival the mastery of Ivan Bunin. Some of them, however, are talented and even highly gifted, as, for instance, Ivan Shmelev, with his vivid, beautifully painted images of bygone Russia. Shmelev does not only give us pictures of a remote past; some of his tales, as the *Stories of Russia* and *Nyanya from Moscow* present a record of the Revolution. But, even here, the author still depicts the old world standing up to meet the flood of obscure new forces and as yet not entirely submerged by them. Thus in "The Pigeons," Shmelev gives a picture of Moscow during the early years of "military communism"; he admirably renders the atmosphere of Russia's ancient and sacred capital which has suddenly been plunged into the revolutionary turmoil: "The Red Square, majestically enveloped in the silent harmony of ancient memories, with the sanctuary lights burning near its sacred gates, regarding with the eyes of the past" the ragged crowds and armed bands incarnating revolt, civil war, and the epics of "the unknown International."

This link with Russia's secular forces can also be found in the works of Alexis Remizov, one of the most peculiar and enchanting writers of the senior generation. His novel *Olya* is devoted to the revolutionary youth of St. Petersburg in the beginning of the present century. But most of his other works are legends and fairy-tales, and even his realistic stories are pervaded with an atmosphere of Hoffmannesque phantasy. Remizov's very style and language are a projection of his country's oldest and most genuine traditions; they are the style and language of ancient Russian legends, spiritual verses, and religious books. And if Remizov is related to modern writers, it is to such profoundly original Russian authors as Leskov and Rozanov, who drew their inspiration from Russia's deepest religious and mystical sources.

Among the minor authors of the "old school," whose works also represent a series of recollections of a more or less autobiographical character, we must still mention Boris Zaitsev and his *Gleb's Journey*, M. Osorgin and his *Sivtsev Vrazhek*, and F. Stepun and his

Nikolai Pereslegin, all of which are not without interest, though, unfortunately, we cannot analyse them in this brief survey. To these works—which, though dealing with personal memories, are written under the form of fiction—should be added books of memoirs, such as M. Osorgin's *Times* and Alexandra Tolstoy's recollections of Yasnaya Polyana, excellent in style and atmosphere and invaluable as a testimony.

However, it would be a mistake to generalize and to assert that the entire production of this senior, or as we might call it, "classical" school of Russian émigré literature, is exclusively an "Elyseum of memories." We have, for instance, the works of Dmitry Merezhkovsky, who during the last years of his life published a series of books which do not deal with Russia at all; they are religious and philosophical essays of a highly dynamic character. Our survey is limited to the novel and short story, and such works as Merezhkovsky's *Jesus the Unknown*, *St. Paul*, and *St. Francis* are beyond our scope. Yet we cannot omit mentioning them, insofar as they represent a high literary value. Merezhkovsky has attempted, as he declares himself, "to brush away the dust of ages from the Gospels," and to give an entirely new, direct, and true representation of Christ, as an incarnation of the *Mysterium Tremendum*. As he further says, he wants his image of Christ to "bring the atmosphere of another world, as a man entering a house on a winter day brings with him the smell of frosty air." He has also sought to revive the personality and the dynamic atmosphere of a St. Paul and a St. Francis, whose message is no more heard in its genuine "height and breadth"; he appeals "to the musical perception of the heart," in order that man should be reminded that Christianity is not merely a historical phenomenon or a code of moral and dogmatic teachings; it is "the religion of absolute desire," "the stars of the kingdom shining in the darkness of night."

Another author belonging to the senior or "classical" school is Mark Aldanov; yet he stands somewhat apart, for, though being a representative of the older generation, his career actually started and developed abroad, where he has published most of his books and historical sketches. Aldanov can be truly called an historical writer—for nearly all his works deal with outstanding periods of European and Russian history: *St. Helena*, *Little Island*, *The Ninth of Thermidor*, *The Devil's Bridge*, *The Conspiracy*, *The Vodka Punch*, *The Tomb of a Hero*, etc. In such novels as *The Key* and *The Cave*, Aldanov gives us a remarkable account of the Revolution in Russia and of the life of Russian exiles abroad. In the *Beginning*



of the End he draws a curious picture of high Soviet officials—an ambassador, a military attaché, and a secret agent—sent upon a mission to bourgeois Europe and entering into contact with the “capitalist world.”

Aldanov possesses not only remarkable historical erudition but also a deep sense of history. His works are marked with a sort of quiet irony, a disenchantment without bitterness. His clear-sighted judgments on men and events are never aggressive, and there is a charm about his reserved melancholy. He is acutely aware of our modern tragedy, of the end of the old world, and of the birth of a new one, which, in his mind, will not be an improvement. . . . He has been compared to Lytton Strachey; yet he possesses a far deeper dramatic sense than the author of *Queen Victoria*. He makes us feel the march of time and fate and the frailty of human nature in the face of the world's tremendous upheaval.

Before closing this list of the writers of the old generation, we must still mention a remarkable poet, essayist, and critic, Vladislav Khodasevich, whose works, more than any others, can be termed “classical.” His writings are masterpieces of style and perfect taste, his poems—among the best of modern Russian literature. His *Life of Derzhavin* ranks among the most brilliant biographical novels of our time. This writer's death, which took place in Paris a few months before the war, must be deplored by all those who are devoted not only to literature but to that almost extinct literary form which was called *belles lettres*.

#### IV

The general mood which pervades the works of the older generation described above, is pessimism. Their love of Russia is a melancholy, “Elysean” love; their attitude towards the present world is sombre and full of forebodings. Yet this pessimism is, as we have seen, “classical.” It is steeped in harmony, expressed in a noble and measured style.

Pessimism is also inherent in the younger generation. But it is neither harmonious nor classical. Born under the influence of modern Western writers, especially of Marcel Proust, André Gide, and James Joyce, the works of the younger émigré poets and novelists are complex and tormented. As we have said, they have no clear memory of Russia, no organic link with the past. One of the most talented representatives of this younger generation, the poetess Marina Tsvetaeva, writes expressly that she has forgotten all landmarks, that for her “every house is strange, every sanctuary empty.” This does not mean, however, that the representatives of this young

pleiad are completely denationalized. They still bear in their hearts what the gifted young writer Vladimir Nabokov calls "the most bitter love of Russia." Almost without being aware of it, they have inherited the Russian tradition—a serious attitude towards literary creation, considered as a mission which must be fulfilled earnestly and which requires continuous effort and sacrifice.

The poetical works of the new school present a great variety of style and inspiration; unfortunately, their quantity is often superior to their quality. Very few of these young poets will probably survive; much of what they have written is ephemeral, if not utterly feeble. Even those who possess talent will still have to develop their gift and acquire experience. But there are several good poets among them: Boris Poplavsky, Antony Ladinsky, Anatoly Steiger, Vadim Andreev, David Knut, Sofiya Pregel, Lazar Kelberin, Alla Golovina, Georgii Ivanov, Irina Knorring, Yury Mandelstam, Lidiya Chervinskaya, Galina Kuznetsova, Vladimir Smolensky, Yury Sofiev, etc. And there is perhaps one very great poet, Marina Tsvetaeva, whose writings, both in prose and verse, rank among the best pieces of modern Russian literature. Their essential trait is that, though Tsvetaeva denies all "landmarks," she is more closely linked than the others to Russian soil and tradition. There is nothing typically "émigré" about her poems, they might have been written in Russia. (Actually, this poetess has recently returned to Russia, but we are not informed whether she has written anything since her return.) Marina Tsvetaeva combines a rare quality of inspiration with a rare quality of style, in which every word, every rhyme and inflexion have been lovingly chosen. But there is nothing elaborate or artificial in these writings. They are bold, vigorous, direct, and of an admirable sincerity.

Another poet of the young school, Boris Poplavsky, deserves our special attention. Not only because, after Tsvetaeva, he is probably the most gifted of this pleiad, but also because his tragic life and death are, so to say, symbolic of his generation.

Boris Poplavsky belonged to the Paris group of young poets and almost immediately gained recognition. His poems reflect some of the mystical and phantom world of Alexander Blok, though his early death did not allow him to achieve mastery. Poplavsky, who committed suicide, after having shared the sophisticated life of the Montparnasse literary *Bohème*, left an unfinished novel, *Home from Heaven*, a collection of posthumous poems published under the name of *The Wax Wreath*, and a diary which is a deeply moving and tragic confession.

"I live," writes Poplavsky in this diary, "under terrific pressure, without a theme, without an audience, without a wife, without a country, without friends. Again and again my life is about to start on a journey. . . ." He speaks of himself as of an eternal vagrant, suffering continual poverty and loneliness; he calls himself a "Paris Dionysius in ragged pants," who must "accept eternity in a torn coat." He searches for God and has an acute sense of the supernatural, yet he somehow fails to discover it, and roams in a cold, disconsolate night of doubt, which gradually leads him to utter despair and death. Perhaps, the secret of this despair lies in the fact that, as writes Nikolai Berdyaev commenting upon Poplavsky's diary, "he made religious experiments instead of seeking religious experience." But the despair was genuine, it reached a depth and intensity, a "terrific pressure" which was in itself a purification. Perhaps, had he lived, he would have become a Russian Rimbaud and would have attained genuine poetic and spiritual experience.

As it is, Poplavsky's death deeply shocked the literary group to which he belonged. It was strongly felt that the ultimate desolation which this gifted poet had reached, threatened his entire generation. For were not all these young men "without an audience, without a theme, without a country," just as Poplavsky had been? Though influenced by modern Western art and culture, they had not assimilated it; yet they could not live in the past as the older generation was doing. It was after this tragic episode that a literary club, *Krug* [Circle], was founded in order to create a more constructive, positive, and healthy atmosphere. It was an attempt to collect and consolidate such spiritual and cultural Russian forces as could dispel the shadows of pessimism. It is difficult to say whether such an attempt could have been successful in the long run. Georgii Adamovich, the distinguished Russian critic who wrote for many years in Paris, declared that, on the contrary, the new school should carry to the extreme the tragic sincerity of youthful pessimism and pursue the "disintegration of culture and personality." While the classical and aloof Wladislav Khodassevich mockingly called these young poets "tiny Prometheuses bound to the tables of Montparnasse cafés," and advised the reader not to take their sufferings too seriously.

Our belief is that the "disintegration of culture and personality," which seems characteristic of the young Russian émigré authors, was partly due to the influence of the modern school of French literature; these tendencies would have probably been overcome in due time, as the "decadent" trends of the beginning of the century have been overcome by the previous generation.

On the other hand, we think that the tragedy of this young generation should not be underrated; it has entered the field of literature under conditions of genuine poverty and hardship. Many young émigré poets and novelists were and are still engaged in exhausting manual labor, or have spent many years hungry and jobless. Most of them have begun life as social outcasts. The very fact that they have triumphed over these difficulties and preserved intact the sources of creative power proves that they are something more than "tiny Prometheuses" and deserve a better fate than the typical Montparnasse amateur and high-brow.

Among the novelists of the younger generation, we must first of all mention Vladimir Nabokov (Sirin) who, though young in age, can be considered as an almost mature writer, with a long list of remarkable works behind him, several of which have been translated into foreign languages. Nabokov, who is now living in America, and who was educated at Cambridge, has recently published a novel in English: *The Real Life of Sebastian Knight*, which is quite as excellent as his works in Russian.

Nabokov is certainly the most talented young Russian émigré writer of our day. He is also, doubtlessly, the strangest, combining the pessimism and "disintegration" we have described above with a lyric strain and a true dynamism, which carry him far from the sphere of disenchantment. Nabokov's world is an *enchanted* world, and if it appears at times nebulous and fluid, it is because the author consciously avoids the rigid framework of the ordinary novel. His stories often seem to have no beginning and no end. Thus, for instance, he concludes one of his novels *The Gift* with the following words: ". . . And yet the ear cannot part at once with music and allow the story to fade away. . . Destiny still resounds, and for an attentive mind no frontier exists there where I have placed a full stop: the prolonged phantom of being hovers beyond the limit of the page like the clouds of tomorrow. . ."

Nabokov's novels are the fruit of phantasy idly playing with events and human beings; they are full of bizarre situations and of what the French call *coups de théâtre*; but the author always makes us feel that his plots are of no importance, because there is nothing fixed and definite in the world. This is why, no doubt, his heroes love and hate, suffer and commit crimes in an atmosphere of uncanny and dreamy serenity. Nabokov has written a series of brilliant and amusing novels, and a few grave and sombre ones: *The Defense of Luzhin*, *Camera Obscura*, *Despair*, *The Gift*, are among his best works.

This young author has a style full of cold and even frosty brilliance. It is rare that he gives vent to emotion, and if he does so, he quickly puts on again the mask of insensibility. Yet he is far from being insensible, and is capable of expressing genuine feeling. In one of his most recent short stories "Ultima Thule," the hero speaks of his dead wife; though her death has actually nothing to do with the story, its melancholy pervades the entire atmosphere; the author concludes his tale, speaking in the name of the hero, and turning once more to the phantom of the dead: "What is most terrible is the thought that inasmuch as you now shine in me, I must guard my life; my perishable body is now perhaps the only pledge of your ideal existence. When I die, it also shall end." In these words there is an ineffable tenderness, they are indeed a mystic pledge. There would perhaps be much to say about Nabokov's peculiar sense of an imponderable world, which hovers "beyond his pages like the clouds of tomorrow."

Nabokov is often reproached with using a "tricky," artificial language. It is true that he enjoys picking up rare and even bizarre expressions and fabricating entirely new words. He gives one the impression of playing a somewhat crazy and phantastic game; but if one studies his works attentively, one finds in them a secret earnestness, far deeper than that of certain writers, who appear solemn, but who in reality are shallow and unimaginative. Nabokov's apparent frivolity is that of an acrobat or tightrope dancer, dressed up in a gay attire, but who is in dead earnest, because he is accomplishing a difficult and perilous feat. He may indeed become a great writer. He is already one of the outstanding Russian novelists of our day.

Besides Poplavsky, Nabokov, Tsvetaeva, the younger generation of émigré writers has produced a few minor, yet promising authors, such as Gaito Gazhdanov (*The Evening at Claire's, Night Road, The Story of a Journey*) and V. Yanovsky (*The Wheel, Second Love*), but they are still too immature and have written too little to permit an adequate judgment. A considerable interest is presented by Nina Berberova, who has published a very moving *Life of Chai-kovsky*, as well as several novels (*Without Sunset* is the most important one) and a few short stories marked with a deep and striking realism. All three writers give an account of the hard and often tragic life of the Russian exiles abroad.

As a whole, this group of "junior" authors does not in any way confirm the assertion that a writer uprooted from his native soil is incapable of creation. It is already obvious that the second generation of cultural émigrés has not remained barren. Its most talented



representatives belong to Russian literature just as much as those who are living and writing in Russia. The day may come when the two currents will merge into one and when all temporary landmarks dividing them at present will finally disappear.

No doubt, however, that this new generation of émigré writers has as yet much to learn. What they lack most, perhaps, is a certain depth of feeling and perception. They seem to have inherited from their elders not only the pessimistic strain but a certain "Elysean" coldness, which checks the genuine flow of great human emotions and aspirations. As was the case with Poplavsky, they are too often content with "experiments," instead of seeking "experience." The feelings they express, the human beings they describe, the landscapes they paint, are sketchy, fortuitous, one might almost say *interchangeable*. Their writings are not dictated by an imperious necessity, they are not haunted by a unique, unrepeatable human destiny, as are, for instance, the works of a Tolstoy and especially of a Dostoevsky.

But this may not be the characteristic trait of the young Russian émigré school alone; it is typical of all modern literature. Dehumanization, disintegration, depersonalization, are the signs of our age, when the human being is submerged by collective emotions or suppressed by a narrow and selfish individualism. Nor do we see in Russia herself a re-establishment of personal human values. If the young Russian writers abroad have not discovered the deeper sources, neither have the Soviet writers found them, though they, no doubt, stand nearer to them than the lonely vagrants symbolized by Poplavsky. Today, we do not behold in Russian literature the author worthy of continuing the great Russian humanist tradition.

# Music in Soviet Russia

BY HENRY COWELL

**R**USSIANS have always been an exceptionally musical people, and life in Russian music has gone forward with surprisingly little change since the Revolution. The sense of music being a matter of prime importance, in Russia it is perhaps best illustrated by the reaction of audiences to rather abstruse modern musical works—a reaction which is almost the exact opposite of that of an average American audience. Here, a work which is known, melodious, and popular, is likely to be encored, while an obscure modern work, full of discord, leaves the American auditors cold or indifferent. In Moscow, on the other hand, when rather obvious melodious works are played, the people are not too interested—"Yes, that's nice," they will say, "we understand this sort of thing, and are familiar with it." But when an abstruse work is performed, one utilizing a new technique, the Russians receive it with interest and call for encores so that they may better understand it.

In the nineteen twenties an examination of all available musical scores from Soviet Russia failed to disclose anything that seemed genuinely first-rate. The older composers were not producing anything of great value, but seemed rather to have lost some of their former assurance. The younger men, on the other hand, were strangely influenced by the Russian composer-mystic A. Scriabin and, curiously enough, by the German reviver of stuffy counterpoint, Max Reger. One cannot be certain as to why Reger should have been an influence; but it may have been because the youngsters felt a lack of formal counterpoint in their natural approach to music. Instead of realizing that this was a genuine asset, they paid tribute to a revival of pedantry which they did not fully understand.

During the nineteen thirties there were great developments. The decade before this had brought an influx of foreign modernists. Bartók, Milhaud, Honegger, and Casella were among those who visited Russia and who were widely discussed. But, for the most part, these composers were rejected in the end as being examples of decadent middle-class attempts to preserve their existence through trotting out a bag of tricks. The idea that these composers were adding to the

world's musical values through an enormous development of new musical resources, was accepted only by a minority. There was a strong growing feeling that "modernistic" music did not reach a large enough audience.

The result of this was that composers who were formerly known as modernists began to make vast simplifications in their melodic and harmonic style, while composers of popular music evolved more complex forms. Consequently, in Soviet Russia, so-called popular and serious music coalesced to a greater extent than in any other country. Some very talented younger composers, such as Alexander Mossolov, continued to write experimentally. The latter, however, lost standing among Soviet composers in 1936, partly at least on that account. Yet, his *Factory (Music of the Machines)*, which is highly dissonant, has been performed by nearly every major orchestra in the world. It was during this period, also, that Dmitri Shostakovich rose to international fame. His early interest was in modern devices and strange discords which later developed into a liking for a return to the outer forms of classicism. There seems little doubt that he has been influenced by nearly every major modernist, with a resultant eclectic style in which one may still trace influences of Schoenberg, Stravinsky, Bartók, and composers of the French school. Shostakovich delayed his interest in a return to abject simplicity long enough so that his remarkable operatic work *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*, which is dramatically forceful, and is an original approach to staged musical works, was severely criticized in Russia. It would seem, however, that through his return to a simpler style in his later works, he regained favor with Soviet audiences. The symphonies which have been so often performed in the United States have, for the most part, a basis in old Chaikovskyian chord riches, upon which are super-imposed eclectic ornaments from varied "modern" schools of music. It was in 1936, too, that Ivan Dzerzhinsky's opera *Quiet Flows the Don* was first produced. This was held up as a model of simplicity and grandeur; yet there is a forced character about the naiveté of the tunes, some of which sound as if they were lifted directly from Stravinsky's *Sacre*. Their originally good quality has been spoiled by bad sinking spells of Wagnerian chromaticism—a medium particularly unfitting for this kind of musical setting.

In the meantime, older well-known composers regained some of the perspective which they had at first lost under the new régime. Samuel Feinberg maintained the tradition of poetic, pianistic writing in works not uninfluenced by Chopin and Scriabin. Nicholas Maiskovsky completed the *Seventeenth Symphony*, besides innumerable

smaller works. Rheingold Glière wrote music for the famous ballet *Red Poppy*. Michael Gnesin continued to create smaller works which were frequently performed. These men also became the teachers of a group of very spirited youngsters, among whom the name of Aram Khacaturian is outstanding. In a style amazingly rich and surging, he gives colorful versions of oriental Soviet themes.

In 1940 the most important composers in larger forms were still engaged in writing big works, sometimes combining these with smaller compositions for the immediate use of soldiers, or groups which are connected with the war. Shostakovich is completing his *Seventh Symphony*. Dzerzhinsky has finished the opera *Volochevka Days* and is now engaged in writing a fourth opera *The Storm*. Mossolov has written an opera *Masquerade* with text by M. Lermontov, whose centennial is being honored by several composers who are creating new special works to his texts. It is apparent that whatever disagreement there may have been over the music of Mossolov in the thirties, he is now again accepted and is active as a composer.

The continuation of music in larger old forms, however, is neither the most important nor the most unusual of the new musical developments. Every factory or farm collective has its own musical group—sometimes there are several. The members sing spontaneously, learning new tunes, as well as singing known folk-songs with great vigor. They also take great pride in learning to read notes and vast quantities of new music have been written for such groups by Russia's best composers. If these new songs catch on, they sell in amazing quantities—literally millions—at one or two kopecs per tiny sheet with the words and tunes. The music is vital and lusty in sound, and most of it is somewhat like folk-music in style; yet from the folk-music base there has been considerable development into a mode which is simple but which contains some elements of new musical excitement. New devices of syllables and spoken words are sometimes used, new ways of introducing cries and wails together with the music in rhythmical, fiery, and impelling forcefulness. When these songs arrive at the point where different vocal parts may be introduced, the parts are simple to sing, yet unconventional to the ear. The whole school gives the impression of being full of vitality and good fun, and yet of being supervised by musicians of the highest attainment.

Nearly all of the best composers in Russia have contributed to this new field, including the symphonists; some newer men, however, have become almost exclusively famous in this field. Davidenko, for example, who unfortunately died young, rose to the point

of being accepted as a classic, and his works are known and sung all over Russia. Sometimes, even, a foreign-born composer has come to Russia to make it his home, and has found success. Such is the case of Franz Szabo, a Hungarian, who has been enthusiastically adopted in Russia as a composer of songs for Russians.

The next development in Soviet music was a natural one. The groups in each factory or farm collective grew more and more ambitious, and many began putting on little plays or "operas" with music written either by a member of the group, or by a professional composer. Some of these groups developed concert dance as well, for the dance has always been a field of great interest in Russia. Thus a new sort of stage-music, capable of performance by amateurs and requiring not too elaborate a stage setting, has sprung up and become popular, giving an outlet for the creative efforts of practically all composers in Russia. In many cases these stage works have grown to an elaboration almost equal to that of older operas. Some of these works are entirely serious, but most of them have a humorous side. It is difficult to compare them with anything that we have in the United States. They are not "comic" opera, as they belong to the class of serious music, and are not created for the sake of obvious and immediate popularity alone; yet they do not fall into the "grand" opera requirement that characters be killed off one by one as the stage action progresses. Perhaps the nearest to opera in spirit are the two stage productions—I won't call them operas—by Marc Blitzstein, *The Cradle will Rock* and *No for an Answer*. In these, it will be recalled, the composer himself played the music for the performances on an upright piano on the stage, and rehearsed the vocal numbers informally, without trappings, with more or less Chinese imagination as to the scenery.

In Moscow there have been developed partly improvised performances staged by small groups, each within some one work-unit (such as a department store, etc.). Usually some composer leads the event, and the players get together in advance to agree on a general plan for the action and music; but beyond this point, under the direction of the composer, they improvise as they go along—plot, music, and action—and it is simply astonishing how perfectly smooth and plausible is the result. Somehow a plot, improvised by everyone at once, makes itself manifest, the music fits the action, and—perhaps most important of all—everyone is thoroughly enjoying himself. There is none of the stultification which comes of being told that one must study for years and years in order to make music, even if one is a genius.



Now that Russia is fighting the worst war ever known in the world's history, one might suppose that music would suffer greatly; but such has not been the case. Russians would never do their best without the stimulation and comradeship of music, and music is sung and played by the men at arms; and groups and more groups have been formed to play and sing for these men, as well as for the ones left at home, and for the workers in the factories of war production, who both sing themselves and listen to performances of music. Sometimes the music is in the form of a concert, more often it is presented in the form of stage performances to which the Russians are particularly partial. Many of the best composers have turned their attention to writing army songs, and songs of wartime content. Some of these lack lasting qualities and are not as vital in tunes as in words; yet some of them are very successful indeed, and are sung by millions all over Soviet Russia. A collection of Red Army songs has just been re-issued in the United States by the Amrus Corporation in New York, and contains a good cross-section of these songs. *The Plain Soviet Man* is said to be very popular, although its tune seems uninteresting and commonplace as a "spokesman for the grandeur of the Common Man." On the other hand, one has Shekhter's *Victory will Be Ours*—a good composer's stirring treatment of simple means, easy to sing, thrilling to listen to, and with impelling rhythm. Songs like these are used by the army men themselves, and are sung to them by the many new groups. Then there is the avalanche of musical plays (or operas if you will) on the war, meant to aid morale. Some of these deal with the present situation—for instance, composer N. Nezlobin has written on army skiing; and some treat of historical subjects which are meant to have some application to the present. A. Veprik is said to be working on a Cantata on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the October Revolution.

Perhaps the most extraordinary large work of fairly recent Russian origin, to which we have access, is Prokofiev's *Alexander Nevsky*. It is for chorus and orchestra, and depicts the life of the hero of that name. The words could, in many cases, apply to the present war, the music uses all of the world-famed Prokofiev technique of writing, but is applied with greater clarity and vitality than in any of his former works. Stirring use is made of "modern" musical devices, but it is based on tunes so simple that any layman can whistle them—a new development, indeed, for the composer of *The Love of Three Oranges*!

Certain known composers, apparently unaffected by the war, are permitted to continue the larger works on which they are engaged,

which have no direct reference to the war, and which possibly could not be properly produced until a return to more normal times. For instance, Vassilenko is on the point of completing his opera *Suvorov*; Ivanov-Radkevich is working on a Symphony, etc.

To summarize, it would appear from the standpoint of a sympathetic outsider that the Revolution did not at first have as great an effect on music as one might have supposed. The Moscow Conservatory, for instance, was never closed for a single school day because of the changed conditions, and the brilliant musical life of the larger cities was maintained. The older composers, however, went through a period of lessened creative activity at first, later regaining their stride. Younger composers turned to writing for larger audiences, and became interested in a simplification of style in which popular and serious elements were combined. Composed music thus spread from cities to towns, and from towns to villages, which formerly had relied on folk-music and that supplied by the church. Older organizations for serious music thrived, and new ones came along, which continue to reach an ever larger number of working people. Government sponsorship has been given to musical activities and musical creation, wherever the musical committees felt that the work was for the interest of a large number of people. It is not surprising that a highly concentrated growth of very fine music and musical productions has resulted.

Russia is doing, at present, what might be expected of a great and musical country at war, except that it supports the music and musicians officially somewhat more than do most countries. Its soldiers sing, and have many new songs written for them; there is a wealth of performing groups for concert music, for stage plays, and for ballets with music; some remaining at home, others touring the fronts. New music is being written for all of them. Besides this, the best serious composers in large forms continue to work on general music. There are in contrast several "jazz" groups, with composers who lay claim to a new and non-American jazz-style. And the war, instead of reducing the use of music, seems to have spurred its use a hundred-fold. In times of deep distress, music is a needed outlet for pent-up emotions.

# D. S. Merezhkovsky, 1865-1941

BY WACLAW LEDNICKI

I NEVER could have imagined when reading in Moscow, at the beginning of this century, the beautiful trilogy of Merezhkovsky, that one day I would be asked to write an obituary of the great Russian author for an American journal devoted to Russia.

It can be said of Merezhkovsky that he lived longer than his popularity. During the last decades of his life he was a victim both of a literary injustice and of the enmity of his political adversaries.

I must confess that personally I was disappointed when I learned that the Nobel prize had not been awarded to Merezhkovsky. I felt that among the living Russian authors of that time it was Merezhkovsky who had the greatest merits, and who enjoyed the greatest international prestige. He represented, one might say, European Russian literature—a literature which had nothing in it of the provincial or exotic. I do not wish at all to belittle the Nobel prize winner, Bunin, whom I greatly admire, but he is essentially a wonderful master of language and artistic expression, and that is the reason why his assimilation in foreign languages is rather difficult. On the contrary, Merezhkovsky was a thinker who tried to establish a certain general conception of human life and human history, and I think it would have been to the advantage of Russian literature had the award of the Nobel prize brought forth new translations and new foreign editions of his works.

As far as Soviet Russia is concerned, Merezhkovsky's political ideas were the cause of a special lack of sympathy for him in his native land after the Revolution; every reference to him in the Soviet encyclopedias or in Soviet books on modern Russian literature contains bitter and malignant criticism, not only of his political opinions but also of his general ideology.

But there was also a third reason for the lack of popularity suffered by Merezhkovsky during the last twenty years of his life, and that not only in Soviet Russia. The culminating point of his literary activity was connected with the advent in Russia of Symbolism and "decadence." Since the First World War this period in literature and art had not been liked in Europe, and thus Merezhkovsky, as one of its most prominent Russian representatives, became a victim of the general aversion towards modernism.

We should not forget, however, that especially in Russia, the Symbolist movement had great achievements to its credit, and that Merezhkovsky, one of its most creative spirits, played a particularly important part in it. He was one of the first among the Russian modernists to proclaim the cult of an independent art. To understand the importance of this, it is enough to remember that in Russia this reaction against art devoted to non-artistic aims came after a long period during which Russian art and literature had remained imprisoned by social and political interests. True, we know today the Pisarev, Dobrolyubov, Chernyshevsky, Plekhanov, and their like, have exercised a greater influence in recent times than their adversaries. This does not mean, however, that in his day Merezhkovsky's fight against them was not absolutely legitimate and understandable, neither does it nullify the importance of what he and the other modernists were able to achieve.

Among the achievements of this new independent art one should mention first of all the improvement of the artistic form—especially in poetry. The Symbolist poetry enriched the imagery and increased the expressive power of the Russian poetical language, and it greatly advanced its euphony, by the use of new alliterations, rimes, and rhythms, as well as by the general melodiousness which characterized the verse of the Russian modernists. Of course, in this field their teacher was in the first place Verlaine. Here, the part of Merezhkovsky as a poet was of less significance than his rôle as a promoter of the new current in literature. It was he who in his study on the *Cause of the Decline, and on the New Trends in Russian Literature*, proclaimed the coming of a new art with "a mystical content, the use of symbols and the broadening of artistic receptiveness." This brings us to another achievement of modernism, this time an indirect one: the cult of independent art and the "broadening of artistic receptiveness" gave birth to a new school of literary criticism and literary history—the school of formalism. Of course, the Russian formalists had German (and some Italian) teachers, but of greater importance was the general atmosphere which the modernists created, and the special prestige with which they endowed literature.

In a more general sense modernism played a very great cultural rôle in Russia. It imported into Russia the new Western European literature, and Merezhkovsky was one of the most active workers in this field. The French, English, German, Italian, Scandinavian, Spanish, and Polish novel and poetry were introduced by translations, studies, quotations, imitations, on such a scale as perhaps never before. Russian culture at that time was evolving with that of Western

Europe, and Merezhkovsky with his *Eternal Companions* had a great deal to do with that further Europeanization of Russia. Nor was this process limited to modern European literature. His *Eternal Companions* began with Greek and Latin authors; his translations from Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides introduced Greek poetry into the very center of Russian literary life, and in that field his activity was parallel to the great rôle played in Russia by the foremost Polish classical scholar T. Zielinski. This *renaissance* of the classics in Russia at the beginning of the present century was an outstanding cultural phenomenon, and Merezhkovsky's part in it cannot be forgotten. His name must be ranked with those of Gnedich, Zhukovsky, and Maikov.

Merezhkovsky continued still another tradition—that of Russian "Italianism," and here he is among such writers as Batyushkov, Venyutinov, Boryatinsky, Pushkin, Gogol, Countess Rastopchin, Mey, Maikov, Bryusov, Blok, Bely, Prince S. Volkonsky and Muratov. His *Leonardo da Vinci* and his *Italian Novellae*, including the one on Michael Angelo, display a wonderful knowledge of Italy and an ardent love of her civilization, her art, and her beautiful landscape, and it is he who acquainted the average Russian with this foreign beauty. Enthusiastically European, he emphasized, with some exaggeration, the fact that "the Russian Symbolists were the first real Russian Europeans."

Merezhkovsky is best known as a historical novelist, and in my opinion he is a brilliant one, in spite of the fact that his novels are somewhat overloaded by extreme erudition. His *Julian the Apostate* is a striking example of this.

It has often been said about his "trilogy" that he had *tiré par les cheveux* real history to make it serve his philosophical and religious conception—that peculiar paganized christianism or christianized paganism of his, which also might be described as a kind of Manichean dualism, envisaging an eternal struggle between good and evil, between Christ and Antichrist. This may be so. But where is the historian who does not write his own subjective history of the past? And in spite of this historical "deformation," the artistic and poetic power and suggestiveness of *Julian the Apostate* and of *Leonardo da Vinci* are immense, striking.

*Peter and Alexis* is perhaps too elaborate and too tendencious, but the scope of the author's psychological, moral, and historical interests is so great, his documentation is so rich, and his horizon so spacious, that, in spite of the colorfulness and the remarkably picturesque language of A. Tolstoy's *Peter I*, it appears like a movie in



comparison with Merezhkovsky's great panorama. In Merezhkovsky's *Peter* there is the same kind of deep, secret, mysterious light, which is so characteristic of Leonardo's paintings.

Merezhkovsky, especially in his Italian novels, has given us brilliant examples of historical stylization. If one compares his shorter stories with the Italian *novella* of the Renaissance period, one can see how well he had mastered that style. Here again he was a promoter: immediately after him Bryusov wrote his *Altar of Victory* and his *Angel of Fire*, two historical stylizations; and simultaneously Boris Sadovskoy, Ausländer, and others began to write in the same manner.

In connection with Merezhkovsky's *Leonardo da Vinci* and his *Alexander I*, there must be established another of his claims to a prominent place in the history of literature, and that on an all-European scale. I have in mind the modern form of the so-called *biographie romancée*. Unless we search for its origin in Plutarch, or later in Boccaccio's *Vita di Dante*, or still later in Lamartine's *Histoire des Girondistes*, in Dumas' biographies, in Macaulay or Carlyle—we must consider Maurois, Emil Ludwig, Strachey, and so many others as pupils or descendants of Merezhkovsky and of his fellow-worker in this field—Romain Rolland. In Russian literature this form has richly developed, especially in our own days. I cannot quote here all the names of the indirect Russian followers of Merezhkovsky. I say indirect, because the modern Russian *biographie romancée* has developed under Western European influence, but two names should be mentioned: that of Tynyanov—for Soviet Russia, and that of Khodasevich, the author of the best biography I have ever read, that of Derzhavin—for Russian literature in exile.

To me Merezhkovsky is the obvious father of this literary genre, just as Sienkiewicz is the father of the modern historical novel, and for those who remember the remarkable success of *Leonardo da Vinci* in Europe, the continuity which I am trying to establish will be quite clear.

As a literary critic Merezhkovsky is undoubtedly great. His book on Tolstoy and Dostoevsky is a classic. Whoever wishes to study Tolstoy or Dostoevsky will be obliged to begin his study with this book. It has proved to be a very fertile and fruitful work, but the fecundation has remained a secret one. How many ideas on Tolstoy's art and philosophy have been taken from Merezhkovsky and developed after him, even without any mention of his name! Who if not Merezhkovsky has shown the deep and hidden connection between some of the heroes of Dostoevsky and Pushkin? Who has ever

written about the tragedy of Anna Karenina with more powerful eloquence and more deeply moving pity than he? Who else has so brilliantly demonstrated the fact that after the actual battle of Borodino Russia fought two great spiritual battles against Napoleon—in *War and Peace* and in *Crime and Punishment*? And finally, who else so perspicaciously warned against the terrible power of destruction, the dynamic revolutionism of that self-willed and half-educated individual, ready to sacrifice the whole of humanity for his personal purposes and desires, who appears in some pages of Dostoevsky? And now, in the terrible times in which we are living, when everything is tottering in the old world, we may realize better than ever how near the truth was Merezhkovsky when he warned against the coming "kingdom of vulgarity," the coming rule of the Smerdyakovs—of the Smerdyakovs able and ready to destroy everything, every great tradition, every real achievement, because of the flagrant lack of any superior moral element in their empty souls, in their vacant minds, predisposed, as it were, to exist in the wasteland of ruin and desolation.

And Merezhkovsky's *Gogol*? Is not this book a very important one? In spite of the author's impressionism and his tendency to exaggerate Gogol's mysticism, he was able to discover in the writings of Gogol the demon of banality, and how pathetically he warned his country against the terrible command of that demon: "Be like other people are!" He felt, he divined the greatest social importance of Gogol's lesson and he certainly found for it a most lapidary and powerful formula.

And his Pushkin in the *Eternal Companions*? He discovered the suggestive stylization of Petersburg in Pushkin's *Bronze Horseman*, and it was he who showed the significance of the "Petersburg nightmare" in Russian literature. Without Merezhkovsky there would have been no *Petersburg* of Bely and no *Petersburg* of Antsyferov. And it was he again who showed the exodus of Russian literature from Petersburg after Pushkin and Gogol, its search for more lasting and more truly Russian values in the Moscow mansions, in the Volga steppes, in the gentlefolk's nests of Tula and Orel, in the ravines of the Oka river. . . .<sup>1</sup>

Politically, Merezhkovsky was a determined enemy of the Soviets. Immediately after the Revolution, he went to Poland and here, as later in France and in Italy, he lectured against them, he never rested in his fight against them. In Poland his books and his plays have

<sup>1</sup>See Wacław Lednicki, "Russia and Her Culture," *New Europe*, Vol. I, Nos. 10 and 11, 1941.

always been very popular. He was an admirer of Pilsudski and he published a book on him.

I never saw Merezhkovsky. I never met him either in Russia, in Poland, or in France, but once I had a letter from him when he sent me a chapter of his *Jesus the Unknown* for a volume which I was publishing in Cracow in 1933-34 in honor of my teacher Professor Zdziechowski who was a friend of his. I have heard from people who knew him well that he was a man of great and sometimes rude sincerity—this explains, I think, very much.

The days to which Merezhkovsky belonged are gone for ever. There was a captivating charm in that later part of the "nineteenth century," in that *fin de siècle* of 1905-1914, and in Russia no less than elsewhere. I remember that peculiar atmosphere of the Moscow Art Theater, of the *vernissages* of the "World of Art," the performances of Hoffmann and Busani, of Huberman and Kubelik. I remember those "Eleusinian mysteries" in Moscow and in Petersburg, the aesthetic reviews, the ballets, the volumes of Bryusov's and Balmont's poetry, the religious and philosophical discussions, the speeches of the great Russian orators in the tribunals and in the Duma, the "divine" Nikish conducting the Moscow Symphony Orchestra, the passionate Chopinesque music of Scriabin, Shalyapin singing revolutionary songs, the novels of Andreev, Gorky and Kuprin, the plays of Chekhov and those of Wilde, Shaw, Hauptmann and Ibsen, the cult of Nietzsche, the enthusiasm for Baudelaire, Maeterlinck, Huysmans, Verhaeren, Rodenbach, Przybyszewski, for the English pre-Raphaelites, for everything that was uncommon, individual, strange, mysterious, "cruel," for Edgar Allan Poe, for the French impressionists, for Turner.

I remember the cries of the Futurists. . . . And suddenly, that intellectual and artistic tumult was interrupted by a dreadful silence—the silence of the death of Tolstoy. In every living soul there arose on that day an ineffable feeling of solitude and distress. The last great man in the world had gone away.

Yes, I remember clearly that wonderful *fin de siècle*, with its first movies, motor cars, and planes.

And I see now in the center of that life the handsome and very Russian face of Merezhkovsky who, like a Sibylline priest, sits with a book of his prophet Dostoevsky on his knees and listens to the roar of the approaching storm, feels the distant waves of a devastating wind, hears the thunder of the coming catastrophe in which he, the "clairvoyant of catastrophe," sees perishing and vanishing for ever that peculiarly charming and yet so childish prodigal world.

# The Russian Ambassador in France 1789-1792

BY ANATOLE G. MAZOUR

THE rumblings of the forthcoming French Revolution found Russia in the midst of serious international involvements. There was the chronic Near Eastern question engaging the Russian Empire in an armed conflict with Turkey; in the north Sweden, though a declining power, was still giving an account of herself; and lastly, on the western front, Europe was witnessing the performance of the final act of a tragic drama, the annihilation of the Polish State, that Naboth's vineyard in the eyes of the triplet, Russia, Austria, and Prussia. Here, if mutilation of Poland must take place, it was obvious that Russia, against her own will and reason, would have to take part in the act. These three problems shaped the foreign policies of St. Petersburg and were largely responsible for Franco-Russian relations during the crucial years of 1789-1792, as the recently published diplomatic correspondence reveals.<sup>1</sup>

On the eve of the Revolution negotiations for the formation of a Franco-Russian alliance were conducted with utmost secrecy. But the very fact that Russia was already an ally of Austria made negotiations rather difficult because of hostile sentiments toward the land of "Mme Déficit," to say nothing of such problems as those which involved financial expenditure or military risks at a time when France was facing total bankruptcy. Altogether it seemed advisable to wait until the States General were summoned. In such circumstance it was quite natural for the Russian Foreign Office to watch with keen interest the outcome of the election of the summoned States General. Although the first news was rather disquieting to the Russian Ambassador at Paris, for instance the election of that "modern Catiline," Mirabeau, or the growing unrest in the country, nevertheless these alarms were accompanied with hopeful notes that "if unity and harmony reign among the estates, it is most un-

<sup>1</sup>*Literaturnoe Nasledstvo*. [Literary Heritage.] Moscow, 1938. Vol. XXIX-XXX, pp. 343-538. All quotations that follow are from this publication, unless otherwise indicated.

doubtedly true that within a few months France would be reborn and would become, as before, a country totally worthy of respect." But "unity and harmony" did not reign among the estates, and therefore did not favor calculations on the Neva. The Revolution was gaining momentum, thus forcing domestic affairs from the wings of the national stage to the footlights, and making them overshadow foreign affairs. The fall of the Bastille came as the first flash of warning to Ivan Simolin, the Russian Ambassador at Paris, who considered the episode the legal child of the American Revolution.

As the Revolution began to assume a more radical character, Simolin's hopes of seeing France consolidated faded away. "Never was my soul so possessed with sorrow as at present. Paris resembles a den of tigers," he wrote after the lynching of Foulon and Bertier de Sauvigny. France, "that beautiful kingdom," he concluded, "was being ruined by lawyers and parish priests," who ruled the National Assembly. All developments indicated that any counter-revolutionary movement was doomed, and Simolin feared that France was definitely out of the picture, at least until the next century. Nevertheless, in his diplomatic capacity, laboring on a thread of principle, Simolin relentlessly continued to pursue his assigned mission.

The aim of Simolin's mission was also to establish what he called "channels" which were to supply the Russian government with necessary information. This work, accompanied by financial assistance from St. Petersburg, involved some eminent statesmen and members of the Foreign Relations Committee of the National Assembly in Paris, including Talleyrand and Mirabeau; the premature death of the latter grieved Simolin deeply and upset some of his schemes. Nevertheless, on June 4, 1790, he could inform his government, with a great deal of satisfaction, of the partial accomplishment of his mission. The first secretary of the Russian embassy, Mr. Mashkov, by "gratifying" an official of the French Foreign Office (the fee was 10,000 livres), obtained the secret codes used by M. Genêt, Chargé d'Affaires in St. Petersburg, and of the Foreign Secretary Montmorin, as well as a number of other important documents.

The abortive plot of Louis XVI to escape from France and his detention at Varennes was a most embarrassing episode for Simolin. Shortly before the escape of Louis XVI, Mme. Korff, widow of a Russian colonel who had resided for many years in Paris, asked Simolin to obtain from Montmorin two passports for herself and her mother as they wished to leave for Frankfurt. Simolin complied with the request and the passports were granted. A few days later, Mme. Korff dispatched a note to Simolin in which she despairingly ex-



plained that, while burning various unnecessary papers, she had carelessly destroyed her passport and was therefore compelled to ask the Ambassador to obtain a duplicate for her. With surprising credulity Simolin immediately asked the Secretary in charge of passports to issue a duplicate, accompanying his request with the personal note from Mme. Korff, in which she explained her predicament. The request was granted. This passport, accompanied by a goodly sum of money, which Mme. Korff handed over to Louis XVI, without, of course, the knowledge of either Montmorin or Simolin, brought a fury of protest from the Parisians at the Palais Royal. Incidentally, some time later, Count Fersen appealed to Catherine to reimburse Mme. Korff, since she had found herself in financial difficulties because of her magnanimous assistance to the royal family.<sup>2</sup>

Simolin's guilt or innocence in the Varennes episode thereafter became an object of frequent discussion in historical literature. For a long time the consensus of opinion was that the plan had been premeditated on his part. The present publication definitely dispels such suspicions. In the first place, Simolin was never in favor of the risky enterprises plotted by the Versailles camarilla led by Fersen, Marquis de Bouillé, de Breteuil, and Princess Elisabeth, to whom he referred as "that haughty bigot" for refusing to recognize the new state of affairs. In the second place, he had favored, at least during this period of the Revolution, a moderate policy and opposed or tacitly disapproved the Declaration of Pillnitz, for fear that in either case the royal family might suffer tragic consequences. Even more interesting is the fact that on August 29, 1791, we find Simolin gently complaining about the King and Queen who were "in the habit of deceiving Montmorin," and who, referring to their flight, "subjected him to a test that nearly ended very sadly." Throughout the published documents there is abundant evidence that Simolin was totally innocent, so much indeed, that he was subjected to a "correct" but firm reprimand from St. Petersburg for reporting the very episode of Louis' flight, and referring to the passport incident as a "thoughtless" act.

It should be borne in mind that, in spite of his occasional moments of despair, Simolin retained his faith in revolutionary France much longer than did his government, and every time the Assembly took a firm stand against excesses or popular action, he would renew his confidence in its stability. The Champ de Mars massacre of July 17, 1791, Simolin considered "the only means of restoring peace and

<sup>2</sup>*Russkū Arkhiv*, 1866, IV, 800-816.

tranquillity in the capital," and the Assembly suddenly inspired greater hope as a conservative body which would stabilize conditions in France. It was only gradually that Simolin began to doubt the stability of the recently established constitutional government.

But if Simolin had only begun to doubt the stability of that government, Catherine II had evidently long ago accepted a far more determined policy. Already in August, 1791, she thought of breaking off diplomatic relations with Paris and giving no recognition to any of the acts of the government. When in November Simolin informed his government that Genêt would probably remain in St. Petersburg and request permission to present his credentials from Louis XVI, now a constitutional King of France, Catherine made the following marginal notation: "Should Genêt again be accredited, he must be notified simply that nothing will be accepted from him." A month later, Catherine II, examining her correspondence, gathered that Count de Ségur would be appointed to that post. She sent the following sarcastic note to the Foreign Office:<sup>3</sup>

From the newspapers I have read and letters I have examined, I surmise that M. Ségur is dispatched with a mission to Berlin, and it has occurred to me that he might be sent here. Since he is one of those and even the first to renounce his title of nobility, he is not to be accepted. The first means by which he might be sent back is to declare to him in Riga that there seems to be an order not to let him through; the second is that, after allowing him to arrive, tell him that a bourgeois is not allowed to present himself at the Court; if he has brought some wares, let him carry on his trade, but I do not wish nor can I receive him as an ambassador of a captive King. Even the Pope refused to receive him.

Simolin's recommendations eventually began to irritate Catherine, especially by the middle of 1791, when she had decided to have little to do with a country that had introduced an "anti-Christian constitution." Writing to Grimm, Catherine remarked: "I have received very unpleasant news that Simolin has become a fiery demagogue and is now elated over all the nonsense committed by the worthless National Assembly. I think that the gentleman of Autun led him astray."<sup>4</sup> But Simolin, as yet unaware of Catherine's views, reported on August 3, with considerable irony that the King of Sweden planned to organize an army of some 20,000 mercenaries from Hessen and Spain to intervene in France, and with a touch of glee he added that the plan would collapse, since it was doubtful that Spain would subsidize such an enterprise.

<sup>3</sup>Personal note accompanying Supplement to Dispatch no. 129, December 23, 1791.

<sup>4</sup>*Russkii Arkhiv*, 1878, X, 195. "The Gentleman of Autun" was Talleyrand.

Meanwhile at St. Petersburg, the government was preparing to break off relations with France altogether. A dispatch from Count Ostermann, dated December 16, advised Simolin to move to Brussels, whence he could closely follow events in France, while leaving behind M. Novikov, Chargé d'Affaires, aided by secret agents. At the same time, Novikov was ordered to avoid as much as possible any contacts with the Foreign Office, limiting his activities to the obtaining of news about important events and reporting to his government.

Shortly before his departure, Simolin was secretly received by both Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette. He was asked to inform his government that since the King had signed the constitution under the duress of the rebels, "who were capable of committing any crime," his public utterances should not be taken as genuine or binding, while Marie Antoinette added her grievances. She bitterly complained of the Laodæcian attitude, of the callousness and instability of her brother, Leopold II, who, according to her, retained "the mentality of a small Tuscany duke," and who had "brought into the world seventeen or eighteen children," with whom he was so preoccupied that he neglected his kin. Simolin promised personally to deliver the message to Leopold, Count Kaunitz, and to Catherine II. He left Paris on February 7, 1792, and loyal to his promise, went promptly to Vienna to plead on behalf of the French Monarchy. He warned the Court of the danger of revolutionary contagion, but both Leopold II and Count Kaunitz remained totally indifferent to Simolin's pleas.

As the Revolution proceeded with its course to the left, Simolin moved more and more to the right. The developments of August 10, which terminated the monarchy, was to Simolin a "hideous" affair, while those responsible for the overthrow became "monsters, vampires, and cannibals." The Convention, which to him was merely an assembly of Parisian bandits, he ventured to predict, would wreck the dynasty. The September prison massacres of 1792 aroused his fury to a degree where he began to demand openly that the Continent intervene on behalf of civilization and slay that French python. "The history of tigers and anthropophagi," he cried, "did not record such barbarous and wild scenes, and the vengeance of these monsters demand retaliation on behalf of all Europe, and a war of extermination in order to spare the rest of the human race from similar insanity." He was elated to learn of the London declaration announcing that any Frenchman responsible for violence against the royal family would find no haven within the entire British Empire. The trial of Louis XVI, followed by his execution on January 21,

1793, signified the pathos of the Revolution and produced upon Simolin a most painful impression. It converted him into a rabid enemy of the French nation, which he believed deserved nothing but physical extermination. The only hope now was Vendée, which, he thought, would bring nearer the hour of reckoning for the nation of regicides.

If Vendée aroused hopes, the treachery of Dumouriez made him believe that the end was near. To Simolin the deserted general suddenly became a *persona gratissima*, a savior of mankind. He hastily dispatched the news to his superiors, congratulating them upon the important event, concluding that this act would at last terminate the madness in France and grant the blessings of peace to the continent. He fanatically refused to believe that the old order was dead—root, branch, and twig.

Simolin's conduct had long been watched by the French authorities, and his sudden departure from Paris after his audience with Marie Antoinette only justified their suspicions of his counter-revolutionary activities. As a result the government sequestered all his property which he had left behind him in the French capital, a fact that aroused him to a white fury of indignation. His carriages and horses were not permitted to leave Paris, and a special agent was hastily compelled to sell them for fear that they might be taken away by the state. His old German servant, Krieger, was hurriedly dispatched to Paris at the end of 1792 at the risk of his very life, in order to salvage whatever could be found, but the poor man soon found himself in prison and after some months of confinement was guillotined. The entire property of Simolin, except the tableware, was auctioned, in accordance with a decree issued by the Convention.

Now Simolin could find no words to express his condemnation of what he considered the illegal conduct of a government which was not officially at war with Russia. He declared that he was entitled to compensation, since the property had been sold, but how to present officially such a claim when St. Petersburg had forbidden him to have anything to do with the revolutionary government, was quite a delicate problem to say the least. Pocketing his pride, the same Simolin who considered the leaders of the French Republic anthropophagi and monsters, now implored the Foreign Office in a maudlin style that permission be obtained from Catherine II to authorize him to enter into negotiations with the Convention concerning the possible restoration of his property. Needless to say the effort was futile.

Such, briefly, is the account that can be given after examining the diplomatic correspondence of Simolin. The Russian Ambassador, as

we have seen, was in sympathy with the moderate constitutionalists chiefly because he hoped that the sooner an understanding was reached, the sooner stability within the country would be gained, and France could once more throw her weight into international affairs against England. But this hope soon faded, and with it followed a long chain of disheartening events. The capture of the Bastille and the March on Versailles, the flight of Louis XVI to Varennes, and his humiliating return to Paris, all these changed the picture from a "bloodless Revolution" into a "den of tigers," and removed further and further France's likelihood of becoming an ally of Russia. From about the end of 1791, Simolin gradually shifted from the moderate camp to that of the Right and finally landed among the most rabid counter-revolutionists who cried for intervention. The degree of his Frankophobia moved in direct proportion to the participation of the "plebeian" masses in the historical drama that was unfolding in France. Each dispatch carried additional venom against all the left leaders if not toward the entire nation of France. Along with his bitterness towards the government, his pessimistic views increased also concerning France's possible participation in his projected European concert of powers. In the spring and summer of 1791, Simolin was still engrossed in the problem of bringing into action the French fleet in order to paralyze the Anglo-Prussian diplomacy which stimulated continuation of the Russo-Turkish war. But with the avalanche of events his "sympathy" turned into "objectivity" and the latter into hostility, which, in turn, deteriorated into fanatical "phobia."

Events moved too rapidly, and instructions reached the embassy too late for the tempo of the period, with the result that the government's views did not always coincide with the policy pursued by the Ambassador, who acted on his own initiative. By September 1791, the inevitable resulted. While Simolin was still in the state of "objectivity," Catherine II had virtually decided to break off relations with the "gang of criminals" who deserved nothing less than the Tarpeian Rock. In the fall of that year, she planned to organize a combined diplomatic and economic boycott of France and obtain the cooperation of the other Powers; simultaneously, she was scheming for an interventionist policy, in which Austria and Prussia were to play a prominent part. Instead of a policy of direct action, the course was now to be changed into one of diplomatic moves. Rather than an alliance, it was now thought desirable to form a combination to keep Austria and Prussia preoccupied in the west, and thus allow Russia a breathing spell.



When Simolin learned about this scheme, he quickly reversed his policy. About December 1791, he ardently commenced to favor intervention and began to look upon the legislative body as a gathering of madmen instead of lawgivers. Early in 1792, diplomatic life became almost unbearable for him and under the pretext of a vacation he left Paris on February 7, 1792. Before departing, he was entrusted with a royalist mission to Vienna and to his own government, but his talent for persuasion failed to move the cold, calculating Austrian Chancellor, Count Kaunitz. After the execution of Louis XVI, Simolin saw nothing hopeful whatever for France except the extermination of the "diseased mass" for the sake of European culture and peace. His whole career during this brief and kaleidoscopic period, and his political metamorphosis, reveal the attitude of the Russian Court and that of the "liberal" Empress Catherine II toward the stirring developments of the French Revolution.

## Book Reviews

MILIUKOV, PAUL. *Outlines of Russian Culture*. Edited by Michael Karpovich. Translated by Valentine Ughet and Eleanor Davis. In three parts: Part I. Religion and the Church, 220 pp., \$2.50; Part II. Literature, 130 pp., \$1.50; Part III. Architecture, Painting and Music, 159 pp., \$2.00. Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 1942, \$5.00 the set.

It is fortunate that this ripely mature work of one of Russia's greatest living historians and scholars should have been published in America. Physical and psychological conditions on the European continent are not conducive to the cultivation of arts and letters. The bringing out in America of this illuminating study of Russian culture in several phases, religious, literary, architectural, is a happy example of how America can take up and rekindle the torch of humanistic civilization that is only temporarily dimmed, not extinguished, one hopes, in the older continent.

As Professor Karpovich explains in his foreword, this is an abridgment of Miliukov's original work, undertaken with a view to pruning away superfluous details while preserving the essentials of the author's thought. The abridgment was made with the full approval and cooperation of Mr. Miliukov. It has been carried out with skill and care and will probably obtain for the volumes under consideration a wider audience than they might have otherwise enjoyed.

Of the writing of topical books about Russia there is no end. But there is a distinct dearth in English of profound and informed studies of Russian history, civilization, and national culture and destiny. The effect of one of the finest surveys of the Russian past, Kluchevsky's *Course of Russian History*, has been adversely affected by an inept translation.

In its systematic character and in the breadth of ground which it covers, Miliukov's work stands almost alone. Thomas G. Masaryk, founder of the Czecho-Slovak Republic, attempted something of the same character in *The Spirit of Russia*. But, although Masaryk, who was a first-rate Russian scholar, assembled a good deal of interesting material, he fell short in the matter of organization. Miliukov, in the present edition, achieves a far crisper and more compact presentation of the subjects which he studies with his unfailing erudition.

There has been some polemical discussion of the question whether religious freedom exists in the Soviet Union. In calm, measured, unhysterical accents, Mr. Miliukov says what may well be regarded as the last word in objective truth on this matter in his chapter on the Church during the Revolution. He describes every phase of the relations between the Soviet state and the Orthodox Church with the same grave unimpassioned accuracy that he would show in discussing some such distant event as the schism

under the Patriarch Nikon or the subordination of Church to state by Peter the Great. The picture at the end, which is supplemented with a postscript by Professor Karpovich, on the most recent developments, is indisputable in its factual quality.

During the centuries, when conscious political thought scarcely existed in Russia, popular dissatisfaction often found expression through religious formulas. Miliukov shows the interaction of politics and mysticism in such movements as that of the Old Believers, among whom the extremists counselled and sometimes practiced self-destruction, escape from a wicked world. He traces German influences in the Russian sectarian movement and indicates how the tremendous pressure of an authoritarian state led to its antithesis, in the political and spiritual anarchism of peasant sectarians like the Doukhobors, with their fundamental denial of the state, their objections to private property, to taxes, and to military service.

Equally thorough and interesting is the author's treatment of the architecture which mirrors various phases of Russian historical development and of the literature in which, as in music, Russia's contribution to world culture has been very great. Miliukov is a classicist and a Westerner in his tastes and his historical interpretations. Communist sympathizers, Slavophiles, and admirers of some of the newer forms in art and literature would all doubtless take issue with him on some points, from various angles.

But of the immense worth of his contribution to an understanding of Russian cultural values there can

be no question. In Mr. Miliukov's preface, which is dated Montpellier, France, he suggests a continuity of Russian historical development:

"Under the new name of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Russia is still there—a Russia even more centralized and ruled more severely than ever under the *ancien régime*, but still Russia. The new Union is heir to all the evils of the old bureaucracy, evils that have been exaggerated, while its few virtues have been eliminated."

As one who learned much of the origins of the Soviet Union in reading Kluchevsky's superb narrative of ancient "Rus," this reviewer would have wished that Miliukov had endeavored to carry this line of approach farther, to show point by point how the Russian state after the Revolution is closely linked not only with some aspects of the Russian immediate past, but still more with a more remote Russia. It is perhaps his historian's instinct to prefer factual research to generalization. Superficial generalization is futile and irritating. But surely Miliukov, in the late years of a long life devoted to scholarship and to politics, might well have followed in the footsteps of Taine, in his *Origines de la France contemporaine*, and given a little freer rein to speculation on the links between Russia's past and present and on Russia's significance in the history of civilization.

WILLIAM HENRY CHAMBERLIN  
Cambridge, Massachusetts

BOGOSLOVSKY, M. M. *Petr I: Materialy dlya biografii* [Peter I: Biographical Materials]. Ogiz, 1940-41. Vol. I—436 pp. Vol. II—624 pp.

The publication in Soviet Russia of these two volumes is an important event in Russian historiography. For years it has been known that Professor Bogoslovsky, one of the foremost specialists on eighteenth-century Russian history, who died in 1926, had left behind him a monumental biography of Peter the Great on which he had been working during a long period of time. It also has been known that a few typewritten copies of the work have been deposited with the principal libraries of the Soviet Union. But it has taken fourteen years to see the book published! Apparently, at first it was considered unworthy of publication because of its factual and non-Marxian nature. There is a veiled reference to that in the author's preface now available in the first volume, while Mr. Lebedev's editorial foreword contains a belated recognition of the "bourgeois" historian's valuable work. One is tempted to say: better late than never.

It appears that at the time of his death, Mr. Bogoslovsky had completed only the first four volumes of Peter's biography, bringing the story up to 1700. Of the two published so far, the first deals with Peter's life from the beginning to 1697, including the two Azov campaigns, and the second is devoted entirely to Peter's famous European journey of 1697-98. If one remembers that, at the author's death, twenty-five years of Peter's life still remained to be covered, one is impressed by the truly stupendous scope of his undertaking. Unfortunately, what we now possess is only a fragment, but even for this we should feel profoundly grateful to the late historian.

As the author's modest subtitle indicates, his purpose was not to produce a work of synthesis and interpretation, but to provide a firm factual foundation for a definitive biography of Peter. Every one familiar with the literature on the subject must acknowledge the urgent necessity for such a preliminary investigation. Proceeding in a strictly chronological order, and reducing his own comment to a minimum, Mr. Bogoslovsky tries to reconstruct Peter's life — day by day, whenever possible—on the basis of diligently collected and carefully sifted evidence. The book is written in a beautifully simple style, and yet, because of its nature, it is not what one would call "easy reading." But those who will make the effort will find ample reward in a much clearer understanding of Peter's personal development and in a more intimate acquaintance with the life of the period which is presented in many picturesque details. Needless to say, to the specialist this work will remain indispensable.

It is a pity that a book of so great an importance has been produced in such an unsatisfactory form: it is printed on very cheap paper, and the technical quality of the illustrations leaves much to be desired.

MICHAEL KARPOVICH

*Harvard University*

POLOVTSOFF, ALEXANDER. *The Favourites of Catherine the Great*. London, Herbert Jenkins, 1940. 288 pp. 12s. 6d.

The love affairs of Catherine II have inspired a voluminous literature, much of it either fiction, apocryphal, or gossip. In his preface to the present volume, Maurice Palé-

ologue, former French ambassador to the Russian court, affirms that this work differs from its predecessors in the absolute accuracy of its factual information. These facts, it must be said, are more than familiar in their larger outline. Catherine's German birth, her marriage at sixteen to the ill-starred and witless Peter III, the coup d'état, her successive love affairs, this is well-traveled territory.

The subject-matter in *The Favourites of Catherine the Great* follows the conventional pattern, varying only in its emphasis upon detail, and its resurrection of dashing drawing-room warriors who had their fleeting hour and a fat pension for the rest of their worthless lives. That the story gains by its re-telling here is to be questioned. Of the even dozen "official" lovers of the great Empress, only three were much more than nonentities, namely: Ponyatovski, Orlov, and Potemkin. The first acquired some subsequent fame as the last king of Poland; Orlov, of course, was intimately associated with the events of Catherine's accession to the throne; while Potemkin is clearly the one man of the lot who may claim some genuine historical stature, and this by virtue of his military and diplomatic activity rather than through his prowess in the boudoir. Only Potemkin appears to have been able to maintain his position as advisor, confidant, and friend in the years following his replacement in Catherine's affections. And even this latter event was instigated by Potemkin himself.

Mr. Polovtsoff makes no effort to probe the economic and social realities behind the imposing imperial façade. Even political developments

barely intrude upon the narrative. This, to be sure, is the author's intention. Let there be no mistake. The interest here is clearly boudoir history. But except in so far as intrigue affects diplomacy and politics (there is little or nothing of this in the book), it is an honest question whether boudoir history really amounts to anything. In short, M. Paléologue's concluding observation that "this volume will soon be placed on a par with the most attractive and serious works portraying the same period" is absolutely untenable. The story has been told before. It will be told again. And neither now nor then will it mean very much to the serious student of Russian history.

DOUGLAS K. READING

Colgate University

OLDENBURG, S. S. *Tsarstvovanie imperatora Nikolaya II*. Tom I. [The Reign of Emperor Nicholas II]. Belgrade, Society for the Diffusion of Russian National and Patriotic Literature, 1939. 385 pp.

S. S. Oldenburg's volume should be welcomed by all who are interested in an authoritative presentation of one of the most significant and dramatic periods of the history of Russia, the reign of Nicholas II, and it should also find favor with those who are looking for a study of the personality of Russia's last Tsar.

S. S. Oldenburg's imposing work, upon which he spent more than four years, was completed in August, 1939; originally, it was to consist of four parts, two of which would make a volume. But, before war came, only Volume I could be



given to the world. Because of subsequent conditions in Europe, the publication of Volume II had to be postponed. Volume I, here reviewed, covers the period from 1894 to 1907. The first part deals with the first nine years of the reign of the Tsar, while still an autocrat. The second is a survey of the "transition years," or those from the Russo-Japanese war to the final change in the electoral law of June 16, 1907, which made possible the establishment and maintenance of working relations between the administration and the Duma. This whole period was crowded with so many important events that the limited space of this review does not admit of even a simple enumeration of them.

However, it is not the events themselves, but the author's interpretation of the rôle played in them by Nicholas II that is of principal interest in Oldenburg's work. For one thing, we are made to feel that, contrary to what was generally believed, the Emperor was a man of strong will, and as a rule effected his own plans regardless of outside influence. The impression that he was a weakling, which he often gave, because of his notably gentle ways and never-failing kindness, seems to have been erroneous, according to Oldenburg; it was another case of an "iron hand in a velvet glove."

As an example, the author cites the stand taken by the Tsar at the time of the negotiations of the Treaty of Portsmouth when he refused, despite the counsels of Count Witte, head of the Russian delegation, to make a monetary payment to Japan. To the surprise of everybody, Japan accepted these terms,

and it was only thanks to the Tsar's firmness, as the author points out, that after the war the prestige of Russia in Asia remained virtually the same.

Another example of the Emperor's personal influence, this time in the domain of home affairs, was the decisive support given by him to legislative measures that changed the peasant's status and tended to abolish the village commune. Likewise, the introduction of the gold standard could never have been carried through save for the unwavering support which the Tsar gave to the measure.

The cardinal interest, however, of the whole record centers in the author's comprehensive account of the revolutionary movement which reached its climax in October, 1905, and of the subsequent constitutional experiment. We learn that the days that immediately followed the publication of the Manifesto of October 17, as prepared in accordance with Witte's program, found the author of this program himself, disillusioned and in despair. On the other hand, the Manifesto did not satisfy the revolutionary parties, which demanded the abolition of the monarchy and the establishing of a socialist régime. For his part, Nicholas II, though he had granted constitutional representation, doubted the usefulness of such a reform for Russia. He sincerely desired to see the Duma function and to become a permanent part of the government, but at the same time it was his unshaken belief that the responsibility for final decisions should remain with himself.

According to the author, the greatest menace to the whole régime lay in the hostility toward the ad-

ministration on the part of the intelligentsia. He argues that the adverse criticism of the government's policy was often ill founded, and that in some instances, such as the question of Russia's rôle in the Far East and the abolition of the peasant commune, the educated classes showed an amazing lack of vision. The present reviewer finds it difficult not to concur with Mr. Oldenburg. But from the whole story of the reign, so vividly related by him, it is equally clear, though the author does not say so, that the last Tsar was not fitted to play the rôle of an autocratic ruler of Russia.

It is to be hoped that Oldenburg's second and concluding volume may appear in the near future, and that both will be made available to non-Russian readers in an English translation.

A. M. NIKOLAIEFF

*New York City*

KERNER, ROBERT J. *Northeastern Asia: A Selected Bibliography*. Berkeley, University of California Press, 1939. Vol. I, 675 pp., Vol. II, 621 pp. \$26.00.

The purpose of this brief note is to call the attention of all those interested in Russia's Asiatic developments and relations to the impressive bibliography of Northeastern Asia produced by Professor Kerner with the assistance of a group of collaborators. "A labor of love," to use Mr. Kerner's own expression, the collecting of materials for this selected bibliography lasted almost a decade. The two volumes include about fourteen thousand items — books and articles published through 1937 in Western languages, in Russian, in Chinese, in Japanese,

and in Korean. The material is divided into four main parts: 1) general literature on Asia, the Far East, and the Pacific, 2) China, 3) the Japanese Empire, 4) the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union in Asia and the Pacific. In each of these parts there are subdivisions by topics, and in each of these topical sections the items are arranged in a chronological order by date of publication or in the historical sequence. There is a very full table of contents as well as a subject index. Unfortunately, no author index has been provided for. As Mr. Kerner explains in his preface, this omission was due solely to the fact that no additional publication funds were available. Personally, I would have preferred the omission of some of the bibliographical material — such as that dealing with the general history of the countries involved, for instance, which perhaps would have made the inclusion of an author index possible. I hasten to say, however, that its absence does not impair the usefulness of this work in any substantial degree.

A thorough and detailed appraisal of this comprehensive bibliography, the only one of its kind in the field it attempts to cover, would have required a combined effort on the part of several specialists familiar with the different aspects of the subject and endowed with a corresponding linguistic equipment. All I can say, is that I have found the Russian section extremely useful. The only major omission I have been able to detect is S. V. Bakhrushin's book on the Russian colonization of Siberia (*Ocherki po istorii Kolonizatsii Sibiri v 16 i 17 vv.*, Moscow, 1928). But in a work of such magnitude "accidents" of this nature

are inevitable. All those working in the field should feel indebted to Professor Kerner for his pioneer undertaking.

MICHAEL KARPOVICH

*Harvard University*

CURTIN, JEREMIAH. *Memoirs*. Edited by Joseph Schaefer. Madison, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1940. 925 pp.

The publication of these *Memoirs* was made possible through the presentation, in 1938, of the Curtin manuscript to the State Historical Society of Wisconsin by Jeremiah Curtin's niece. They are a valuable addition to the relatively limited number of works on Russia published by Americans who visited that country prior to the revolution of 1917. As a matter of fact, during the preceding one hundred and forty years, less than three hundred Americans left published records of their visits to Russia (see *Americans in Russia, 1776-1917*, by Anna M. Babey). Curtin's *Memoirs*, probably based on a diary, were dictated by Jeremiah Curtin to his wife, apparently near the end of his life (he died in 1906, at the age of seventy-one). The *Memoirs* are a record of a varied and interesting life. A diplomat, writer, traveler, scholar and business man, Curtin visited many European and Asiatic countries and for some time lived and traveled extensively in Russia, first as a member of the United States Embassy and later as a private citizen. His knowledge of the Russian language and of Russian literature was of great advantage to him in his study of the country and its people.

In his *Memoirs*, Curtin repeat-

edly stresses his admiration for the Russian people and the Government's liberal tendencies and its attempts to increase the welfare of the people. He was indeed an apologist for all things Russian, but a well informed one. Due both to his position and to his knowledge of Russian, Curtin had the opportunity to meet and make friends with many Russians in various classes of society. Tsar Alexander II conversed with him in Russian; he knew Pobedonostsev, Count Witte, and many other high-ranking state officials; had social contacts with many of the rich merchants; visited Tolstoy at Yasnaya Polyana; and was a friend of the celebrated Polish writer Sienkiewicz, who gave him exclusive rights to translate all of his works into English.

Several chapters give a detailed description of Curtin's travels in the Crimea, the Caucasus, and Siberia. Incidentally, he was the second American to visit the Caucasus, the first being George L. Ditson, who had been there twenty years earlier, in 1847.

Other chapters are devoted to Curtin's conflicts with Cassius Clay, his chief at the Embassy in St. Petersburg; these chapters though largely of personal interest, do throw some light on the American diplomatic life in Russia in the late sixties of the last century.

ALEXANDER TARSAIDZE

*New York City*

SIMMONS, ERNEST J., *Dostoevski: The Making of a Novelist*. Oxford University Press, 1940. 416 pp. \$3.00.

This book is designed to supply a full-length English study of Dos-

toevsky that is mainly concerned with tracing the development of his artistic powers and appraising the literary qualities of his work. This limited goal the book achieves very well, though it must not be supposed that the author is able to avoid considerable discussion of Dostoevsky's philosophical and political ideas in explaining his "purely artistic accomplishments" (p. 3). Indeed, more than the usual attention is devoted to the social and political conditions that influenced the novelist. The chief contribution of this book lies in its careful and detailed study of the notebooks and the early drafts of the novels. It contains, for example, an excellent analysis of the eight preliminary versions of *The Idiot*. It presents a full description of the early works (1846-49), emphasizing their continuity with the later ones.

In his introduction, Mr. Simmons underlines the specifically literary character of his study by criticizing the prevailing interest among Dostoevsky's commentators in the philosophical, religious, and prophetic aspects of his work. It cannot, I think, be said that much is gained by raising (on p. 10) the somewhat verbal issue of whether Dostoevsky is "primarily" a novelist or a philosopher. Nor does Mr. Simmons argue convincingly that the general concern with the novelist's message "has served to obscure the fundamental direction of Dostoevsky's thought and to minimize the significant artistic achievement of his fiction" (p. 5). At least, Mr. Simmons's liberation from the traditional attitudes does not seem to have provided him with any markedly original insights or aesthetic judgments.

But Mr. Simmons appears to me to adopt a good critical position in attempting to treat Dostoevsky's philosophy as felt experience rather than as doctrine to be tested immediately for truth. It is only to be regretted that he does not always remain faithful to his own plan. Two notable lapses may be mentioned. In discussing Dostoevsky's "powerful but unjust travesty of his conception of a nihilist gathering" (p. 274) in Part II of *The Possessed*, Mr. Simmons makes much of the *injustice* of Dostoevsky's handling of the socialists and anarchists at whom the novel was partly aimed, but he says little of the tremendous *power* and intensity of the scenes or of the artistic means by which this effect is achieved. Again, he is unable to discern in the teaching of Father Zosima anything more than a philosophy "of stagnation, of failing power, of idleness and beggary which amounts to the debasing of life . . . a negation of the whole ideal of progress" (p. 382). Because Father Zosima fails to answer on *intellectual* grounds Ivan Karamazov's *intellectual* rejection of divine justice, Mr. Simmons finds it to be discordant with his own (not Dostoevsky's) "ideal of progress," and this leads him to underrate the *aesthetic* effect of Book VI of *The Brothers Karamazov*. Such inability to enter *imaginatively* into the saint's religious vision imposes serious limitations upon a critic of Dostoevsky.

The thesis of this book is that Dostoevsky's novels can best be understood as reflections of the novelist's personal conflict between his desire to believe in God and his involuntary skepticism; Mr. Simmons presents a good deal of evidence

that Dostoevsky never resolved this conflict. In keeping with this point of view, Mr. Simmons classifies the main characters of the novels according to three types: the "Double," the "Meek," and the "Self-Willed," the second and third of which are developments of the two aspects of the "Doubles" (Ivan, Raskolnikov, etc.). This seems a fruitful schema, but it is surprising that no account is given of the significant relation between certain pairs of characters, one of which is the "Double" of, and the embodiment of one aspect of, the other: Svidrigailov of Raskolnikov, Smerdyakov of Ivan, Shatov of Stavrogin. It might be added that to be a complete portrait of Dostoevsky as a novelist, the book would perhaps have to sharpen its analysis of Dostoevsky's contributions to the art of the novel by contrasting and comparing his conception of plot-structure, and his methods of character-revelation, with the techniques of other novelists in Russia and abroad. Despite these shortcomings, however, the present study is a very interesting description of an extraordinary artist's sources of inspiration, imaginative sorting and transforming of materials, and methods of work.

MONROE C. BEARDSLEY

*Yale University*

ELSBERG, YA.E. *Stil Shchedrina* [Shchedrin's Style]. Moscow, Gos. Izd. "Khud. Lit.", 1941. 463 pp.

This is a new and valuable analysis of the artistic means of Russia's greatest satirist. Its author is an outstanding Soviet critic, co-editor of the periodical *Literatur-*

*noe Nasledstvo*, which in 1933-34 devoted four volumes to Saltykov. He is also co-editor of the latest Soviet edition of Saltykov's complete works in twenty volumes, of which sixteen have already been published; and is the author of three books on the satirist: *M. E. Saltykov-Shchedrin: Neizvestnyye stranitsy* (1931), *Saltykov-Shchedrin* (1934), and *Mirovozzrenie i tvorchestvo Shchedrina* (1936). This new study, therefore, has authoritative status. It contains much new material and offers several fresh angles of approach.

In analyzing Saltykov's style and the varied methods he employed to delineate Russian life, Elsberg takes up in detail such features as Saltykov's "Aesopian" language, by which he conveyed his satirical representation of political and social ulcers in spite of the censorship. The critic maintains that Saltykov's position in Russian literature can be properly evaluated only in a perspective of the stupendous historical changes succeeding the October Revolution. This is a proper point, in the opinion of this reviewer, although he cannot wholly agree with Elsberg's reasons for making it.

Elsberg ably demonstrates how Saltykov's work was a continuation of that of Gogol, and he draws interesting comparisons between the two in respect to their linguistic tradition, their methods of characterization, their style, and humor. Like Gogol, Saltykov established a satirical epoch of his own, in the post-Reform era, a far more complicated and stormy era than that Gogol knew. Other great satirists, such as Cervantes, Swift, Rabelais, Voltaire, and Radishchev are compared to Saltykov and their influ-



ence upon him evaluated. The most interesting passage in the book is a discussion of Saltykov's naturalism, compared with that of Zola and Terpegorev. There is also an analysis of the "new man" as Dostoevsky and Saltykov, respectively conceived him, and finally a comparison of Saltykov's realism with that of Balzac.

Elsberg gives considerable attention to Saltykov's historical optimism, to his faith in the Russian people, and to the gaiety of the satirist's laughter—a trait little recognized. While Saltykov's satire was in the main of the grimmest, far more so than that of Swift, that grimness was never without its grain of positive affirmation. If there is no trace of romantic escapism in Saltykov, neither is there any sign of philosophic negation. With these views the reviewer is in hearty accord.

Gorky wrote in 1936: "It is impossible to understand the history of Russia in the second half of the nineteenth century without Shchedrin's help." Elsberg shows his influence upon Chekhov and Gorky, particularly in the case of the characters of Klim Samgin and Yudushka Golovlyov.

This reviewer cannot, however, accept Elsberg's conception of Saltykov as the spokesman of the revolutionary thoughts of the Russian people, in the Marxist sense, and he submits that there is ample evidence to the contrary. But apart from this basic difference of opinion, he recommends this study as an extremely useful and illuminating analysis of certain aspects of a great Russian writer who has too long been neglected and misinterpreted and who is only now beginning to come into

his rightful place in the history of literature.

NIKANDER STRELSKY

*Vassar College*

LOVENSTEIN, MENO. *American Opinion of Soviet Russia*. Introduction by Broadus Mitchell. Washington, D. C., American Council of Public Affairs. 1941. 210 pp. \$3.25.

*American Opinion of Soviet Russia* by Meno Lovenstein is a serious and, within its limited scope, extremely thorough study. The choice and arrangement of material show an impartiality and a scholarly approach which add a great deal to its value. Occasionally, the author underscores unduly the inadequacy of some contemporary opinion, apparently overlooking that a similar case can be made against contemporary opinions expressed about any historical event in any country and in any period.

In the introduction, Dr. Lovenstein sets forth the aims of his study. They are: "(1) to show that opinion did shift from 1917 to 1933; (2) to describe the content of this opinion and the nature of the shift; (3) to characterize both as to quantity and quality, the sources in which the opinion appeared; (4) to draw some conclusions concerning the quality of the opinion as a whole; (5) to test these conclusions by applying them to a recent event—the Nazi-Soviet pact—to see whether the study of the opinion from 1917 to 1933 can aid in judging the probable nature of American opinion on Soviet Russia; and (6) to offer a few suggestions for improving the quality of such opinion."

The first four points represent the real value and backbone of Dr. Lovenstein's work. He divided logically the entire period under consideration into three separate phases: 1917 to 1921, 1921 to 1929, and 1929 to 1933. Under each phase he considers in detail opinions expressed by the following groups: labor organs, business and financial magazines, books, newspapers, and governmental documents. The wealth and variety of material represented testify to the painstaking effort which the author put into his study. Because of the way in which the sources of opinion are grouped, the topics on which opinions are expressed almost automatically fall into similar groupings — a fact which contributes greatly to the clarity and harmonious arrangement of the study. The result of this enormous amount of work is convincing, and it is doubtful that anyone can take exception to the author's analysis of the sources of opinion or to their evaluation in retrospect.

If Dr. Lovenstein had been satisfied to limit the scope of his study to the period for which he had systematized the material, there could have been no serious criticism of his book. Unfortunately, by adding two more aims to his study he projected it into a much broader and vaguer field in which errors of omission are extremely important. His conclusions, as applied to the Nazi-Soviet pact, are not convincing, for he does not seem to be aware that the pact was as much of a surprise to the rank and file of the Communists in Russia as it was to an average American political observer and journalist. His suggestions for improving the quality of opinion about Russia

are merely a statement expressing an opinion that such an improvement would be valuable and beneficial to America. No one could possibly quarrel with such a point of view, but to call it a practical suggestion seems far too generous.

As long as Dr. Lovenstein undertook to broaden the scope of his study beyond its natural limits, it seems an oversight that he made no attempt to give any sort of historical introduction to his work by pointing out, at least in general terms, the state of American opinion of Russia prior to the Revolution. Another important omission is Dr. Lovenstein's failure to give as much as a hint about the indirect influence exercised by the course of events in Russia on conservative and progressive thought in America, despite the lack of factual information necessary in formulating an intelligent opinion about Russia.

NICHOLAS WREDEN

*New York City*

DAVIES, JOSEPH E. *Mission to Moscow*. New York, Simon and Schuster, 1941. 659 pp. \$3.00.

Mr. Davies' book which consists largely of his official reports and excerpts from private letters and from his diary (the latter occasionally "expanded for the purposes of clarity") is an ardent plea for a closer cooperation between this country and the Soviets. The bulk of the volume consists of an account of what Mr. Davies observed in Russia during his short term at the Moscow embassy (January 1937-June 1938), while the closing sections are devoted to a highly selective cursory survey of the principal international events affecting the

Soviet Union, from the middle of 1938 to October 1941.

Mr. Davies went to Russia with the determination to avoid the mistakes of Ambassador Dodd who had destroyed his usefulness at the Berlin embassy by his militant hostility to the National Socialist régime. A firm believer in the American form of government and in the capitalist system, Mr. Davies was resolved not to allow his preconceived views to influence his appraisal of the Soviet experiment. Nevertheless, there is much in the Soviet system of which he strongly and rightly disapproved: the ruthless personal dictatorship of Stalin exercised through a subservient bureaucracy; the reign of terror; the low efficiency of Soviet industry; the Stakhanov movement which has "increased the cost of production" and "apparently did not work" (p. 182). Mr. Davies flatly contradicts some of the Soviet's most cherished theories by declaring that differentiation in wages is incompatible with the existence of a classless society and leads to the entrenchment of a privileged bureaucracy. He is on more questionable ground, however, when he puts an excessive emphasis on the boundless opportunities for economic progress offered by Russia's vast natural resources, or when he voices his confidence in the unselfish devotion of Soviet leaders to the cause of social betterment. Even less convincing is Mr. Davies's painstaking endeavor to justify the purges on the ground that they were essential to free Russia from German sympathizers and spies. This ingenious explanation occurred to him, as he candidly admits, after the invasion of Russia by Hitler. One should recall, however, that

charges of plotting for the overthrow of the Soviet régime had been frequently made in Moscow not only against Germany, but also against every foreign country, including the United States. Mr. Davies notes that after the conclusion of the Hitler-Stalin pact Moscow hotels were "full of German agents and commercial travelers and engineers" (p. 470)—a peculiar way of fighting German infiltration. Mr. Davies's insistence on Stalin's kindness and wisdom is at variance with his analysis of the methods and character of the Soviet government. "The government is in fact one man—Stalin the 'strong' man, who survived the contest, completely disposed of all competitors, and is completely dominant. . ." (p. 402), writes Mr. Davies. "The secret police, an enormous military organization . . . , is actually an arm of Stalin's" (p. 407). In the light of this statement, which is essentially correct, the alleged opinion of the diplomatic circles that responsibility for the execution of innumerable Soviet leaders should not be attributed "in a strictly personal sense" to Stalin (p. 191) is singularly unimpressive.

The factual material assembled by Mr. Davies is not always as exact as might have been expected, even under Soviet conditions. He quotes, for instance, the figures of "the total revenue (profits) from industry" as approximately fifty-one billion rubles in 1935 and sixty-two billion rubles in 1936 (p. 184). This is an obvious error. The contribution to the national budget from industrial profits was merely 1.7 billion rubles in 1935 and 3.2 billion rubles in 1936. Mr. Davies would seem to have mistaken the estimated

value of industrial production for profits, an unfortunate slip which must have contributed to his over-optimistic appraisal of the outlook for Soviet industry.

In explaining the persecution of religion under the Soviets, Mr. Davies relates "a most interesting talk" Mrs. Davies had with Madame Krestinsky whose "sincerity and fineness" he believes to be above doubt. According to Madame Krestinsky, the Soviet government "is not against religion as such," •but only against abuse of power by the Church as practiced under the Empire. The situation became so bad "that in the 'Duma', the legislative body created by one of the Alexanders, almost a third of its members were priests and ecclesiastics" (p. 115). Hence the disestablishment of the Church by the Soviets. It is a pity that Mr. Davies reports this story without pointing out that Madame Krestinsky had taken unseemly liberties with generally known facts, that the Duma was created in 1905-1906 under the second and last of the Nicholases, and that the largest number of ecclesiastics in that body was forty-six out of a total membership of 422 (in the Fourth Duma). Moreover, the celebrated phrase "religion is the opiate of the people" was written by Marx some sixty years before the Duma came into existence and has been the slogan of the anti-religious movement in every country ever since then.

MICHAEL T. FLORINSKY

*Columbia University*

FISCHER, LOUIS. *Men and Politics*. New York, Duel, Sloan and Pearce, 1941. 672 pp. \$3.50.

DURANTY, WALTER. *The Kremlin and the People*. New York, Reynal & Hitchcock, 1941. 222 pp. \$2.50.

Mr. Fischer's book presents a bird's eye view of Germany, Italy, Spain, England, and the Soviet Union. It is a huge assignment, handled by a very able journalist who does not take matters too seriously. Mr. Fischer roamed the continent for twenty-two years during the most critical period in the history of man, but he does not seem ready to reveal all that he has seen. The same indecision is conveyed in his account of his break with the Stalin régime.

His 657 pages are studded with famous names, but he does not trouble to draw one complete profile. There is an equal lack of completeness in the historic section of the book. For instance, in his discussion of post-war Germany, Mr. Fischer voices his disapproval of Scheidemann and Ebert and attributes to their reformist policies the Hitler reaction, but there is not the slightest reference to the Communist effort to undermine the democratic Weimar government, the ceaseless campaign against the German Socialists, or the Communist fraternization with the reactionary bloc in the Reichstag.

The Civil War in Spain is described in great detail. It is evident that Mr. Fischer was a friend of the Spanish people and was ready to help in the struggle for freedom. He disapproved of the presence of Soviet Russia's G.P.U. in Spain, and yet in his book does not mention the bloody work of Stalin's emissaries.

Until the last section of the book the author's impressions are all

colored by his sympathy for the Soviet Union. Even after his break with the Stalin régime, as a result of the purges of the Old Bolsheviks and Stalin's alliance with Hitler, Mr. Fischer does not tell the whole story. The entire book does not contain a single paragraph about the Stalin-made famine of 1932-1933, which according to Walter Duranty, took a toll of six million lives. This omission would be analogous to an account of our Civil War which did not mention the battles of Vicksburg and Gettysburg, and their cost in human life.

Mr. Duranty, like Mr. Fischer, is a professional reporter on Soviet Russia, and an "authority" on Soviet conditions.

The author begins his book by the statement that he "had picked Stalin and bet on him throughout, against Trotsky, or Tukhachevsky, or any of them: I backed Stalin the way you back a horse, until you think of it as 'your' horse." On the other hand, his opinion of the Russian people is to be found on the second page of his narrative. He says: "Russians are always Russians, kind, cruel, hospitable, envious, suspicious, affectionate, generous, will shoot you as soon as look, and if he happens to miss, might kiss you the next minute on both cheeks."

The peculiar nature of the Russians is the keynote in Mr. Duranty's defense of the Stalin régime. To explain the famous "confessions" he stresses the difference between the Russians and the Western races. We are told that Americans and Englishmen have lost lives for proven crimes without a word let past their lips. But Russians are different. They find a satisfaction

in 'spilling the beans.'" This statement is a calumny against the Russian people and shows an utter disregard for Russian history. As a rule, Russian fighters for freedom have been tried, condemned to death, executed or deported to Siberia in silence. On the rare occasions when they did speak, it was not to confess or in self defense, but to express their condemnation of the existing régime.

In Mr. Duranty's story of the purges he gives no new evidence against the dead Bolsheviks, and it turns rather into an indictment against the Kremlin. In his own words "the orgy lasted two years." It cost the country "at least 75 per cent of the higher personnel of the diplomatic corps and most of them were shot. Some competent observers place the killed as high as thirty or forty thousand, and exiled a million. One thing is certain, that from 60 to 70 per cent of the leaders in every field of Soviet activity and endeavor were purged and of these at least one-third, and perhaps one-half were shot." He sums it all up: "The purges did incalculable harm and set back the country's progress a full five years."

In the light of this record, what becomes of Mr. Duranty's argument that the purges removed the fifth columnists? Could there be any fifth column activity on a like scale and with equally devastating results? And, then, apparently even the fifth column was not wiped out by these purges, as on July 17, 1941, four weeks after Hitler's onslaught, army political commissars, who had been abolished after the war with Finland, were returned to their posts, their duty being to report officers whose conduct is "unbecom-



ing" to the Red Army and to seek out cowards, panic mongers, and deserters.

According to Mr. Duranty, the purpose of his book was to tell the "truth about Soviet Russia" and to explain "why the boys are fighting." His arguments, however, are unconvincing. It was not until Hitler's attack upon the Soviet Union that some foreign writers did consider it necessary to explain why Russians are making the supreme sacrifice in defense of their country! But, historically speaking, the valor of the Russians is not news. They fought heroically in the Russo-Turkish war and against Napoleon. In 1914, with the exception of Lenin and a few other defeatists, all Russians, including liberals and revolutionists, rallied to the defense of their country.

MANYA GORDON

New York City

BEST, HARRY. *The Soviet Experiment*. New York, Richard R. Smith, 1941. 120 pp. \$1.25.

STRAUSS, E. *Soviet Russia: Anatomy of a Social History*. London, John Lane, 1941. 342 pp. 12s. 6d.

The purpose of *The Soviet Experiment* by Professor Best is "to enable the man in the street and the college student to obtain a wider and clearer understanding of what has happened in Soviet Russia." A certain amount of information about the Soviet experiment will be gained by the reader, but it is questionable whether he will actually gain more understanding of it. Three shortcomings are easily discernible in the book, all too fre-

quently recurring in works on Soviet Russia.

(1) The introductory chapters (I-V), in which the historical background of the Soviet experiment is treated, are based on the widespread myth of the hopeless stagnation of pre-revolutionary Russia. In actuality, during the twenty-five years before the Revolution, Russian life was characterized by an extremely rapid economic and cultural advance, so that the best analogy for the revolution, is perhaps that of the derailment of a fast train.

(2) Chapters VI-XI, in which individual phases of the experiment are briefly discussed, are handicapped by the lack of understanding of its dynamic aspect; the reader gets the impression that the Communist rulers steadily advanced, and that the setbacks due to the resistance of the nation to Utopian experimentation remained in the shadow. This inadequate attitude is somewhat corrected by the special chapter (XII) on recent changes in the Soviet system. However, because of the author's belief in the "stagnation" of pre-revolutionary Russia, he is unable to grasp the significance of these recent changes which, in Pareto's terminology, would indicate a "restoration of social equilibrium."

(3) The evaluation of the experiment by Professor Best is neither too favorable, nor too unfavorable, but the absence of a clear-cut frame of reference for evaluation deprives his judgements of cogent force. The author fails to recognize that evaluations become significant only if facts are compared with other historical possibilities, and if the efficiency and the ethical admissibility of the applied means, in terms of

the moral standards of the epoch, are discussed.

In contrast to Professor Best, Mr. Strauss' *Soviet Russia* is predominantly dynamic. The purpose of the author is to summarize "the historical forces which have shaped Russia's destiny since 1917." The object is laudable, but its realization is a failure. One of the causes is, once more, the acceptance of the myth of stagnation, and it would seem that all the author knows about pre-revolutionary Russia is borrowed from books interpreting it according to the Communist pattern. Consequently, his general conception of the Russian Revolution is that of Trotsky's *History*: nobody could have saved Russia, neither the Imperial government, nor the intelligentsia, nor the masses themselves (the Constitutional-Democrats, in the author's opinion, were the defenders of business interests, the Social-Revolutionaries wanted to transform the Russian peasants into farmers based on the French model!): the providential rôle belonged to the Bolsheviks. Then, owing to wicked capitalists, both Russian and foreign, came the catastrophe: "the transformation of a movement inspired by great ideals into the narrow minded, self-centered and short sighted system of today." The reader easily recognizes the central thesis of Trotsky's *Revolution Betrayed*.

Better than other parts of the work is the discussion of the First Five Year Plan. Mr. Strauss reaches the conclusion that the plan was a success and that its main object was to allow the Communist régime to survive.

In contrast to Professor Best, Mr. Strauss possesses a quite de-

finite framework for evaluation: this is the Communist ideal, not because of its acceptance by the author, but because this was the ideal of the experimentators, and because "liberty and democracy are possible only in certain conditions which were conspicuous by their absence at the time of the revolution." The author fails to understand that the alternative was not communism *vs.* wholesale democracy. The possibility of a middle way, that of moderate democracy in combination with substantial social reforms, should not be denied; and, very probably, this choice would have prevented Russia from reaching the very unfortunate position of being subjected to reckless experimentation.

The book correctly interpreting Russia's destiny since 1917 is still to be written.

N. S. TIMASHEFF

*Fordham University*

ALMEDINGEN, E. M. *Tomorrow Will Come*. Boston, Little, Brown and Company, 1941. 343 pp. \$3.00.

Miss Edith Martha Almedingen, the author of the autobiography, *Tomorrow Will Come*, was born and brought up in Russia. Her father's family was of German origin. One of her grandmothers was English, and her mother had lived the earlier part of her life in England. This was enough for Miss Almedingen to develop a passionate love for England of which she knew only by hearsay. Of Russia she actually did not know much more than the city of St. Petersburg, the Leningrad of today. She loved St. Petersburg only because it was more Western than Russian.

The dislike of Russia and of everything Russian grew in Miss Almedingen from her earliest childhood. It is true that she had little reason to love the country of her birth. Life was cruel to her from the outset, and she came to consider Russia as a prison. Her father abandoned the family when she was a baby. Her mother taught her English rather than Russian. Her brother Gay (a name which makes no sense in Russian) was drowned and her second brother was killed in the war. She and her mother lived in squalor, in one of the poorest districts of St. Petersburg. Miss Almedingen never learned to write Russian properly, although she studied in a Russian boarding school and later entered the University of St. Petersburg. The only people she came to admire and to love, while in Russia, were English or German. From the Russians she held aloof.

Life was bad enough for Miss Almedingen in her childhood and adolescence. Then the revolution of 1917 came, crushing the rich and the poor alike. The Almedingens, mother and daughter, had no possessions to sell. Yet they belonged to the intellectual class which was given no chance in the new frame of things.

They sagged lower every day, and their life became martyrdom: starvation, homelessness, a desperate struggle for survival, illness and at last the death of Miss Almedingen's mother. The chapters in which Miss Almedingen describes the first years of the revolution are extremely good. It is a truthful and vivid picture of humanity uprooted by an inhuman upheaval. It is a heart-rending vision of St. Peters-

burg, the glamorous city of the imperial court and diplomatic corps, sinking to the very depths of misery. Buildings go to ruin, disease spreads, children and adults die from hunger, shoes are made of rugs and clothes of draperies. The search for food takes the place of any other preoccupations, and crimes are committed for a loaf of bread. I was in Russia myself during these years of wrath, and Miss Almedingen's book has brought them back to me with much force. Her St. Petersburg is at times as nightmarish as the St. Petersburg of Dostoevsky or Andrey Bely.

But it is strange to find in this book no relief from suffering and ugliness. It is as if Miss Almedingen were utterly allergic to the beauty of Russia. Yet I have hardly known a foreigner, *let alone* a Russian, able to escape from the deep attraction exercised by the land and people of Russia. It is difficult to forget Russia once one has had a taste of it. Miss Almedingen's dreams, however, were haunted by the green lawns of Kent. She breathed freely only when she left Russia.

Her book is timely. It tells what a revolution does to little people. It is written by an introverted person who knew little joy in life. Those who read it should remember this. The darkness was in the author's soul rather than in Russia.

SONIA TOMARA

New York City

MOWRER, LILIAN T. *Arrest and Exile: The True Story of an American Woman in Poland and Siberia*, 1940-41. New York, Morrow, 1941. 274 pp. \$2.50.

The experience of Siberian exile,

suffered all too frequently by Poles, has left many noble monuments in the past. Free Poland itself, Poland of the years between the wars, was a monument to that experience, for it was in Siberia that the vows were sworn, by Pilsudski and others who freed Poland in 1918. In literature, Joseph Conrad's moving tale of Prince Roman Sanguszko is perhaps the most familiar great memorial to the Polish sufferings in Siberia, now happily ended.

*Arrest and Exile* is the story of Olga Kochanska, an American woman of Polish origin, born and bred in Chicago and educated in Europe.

Madame Kochanska was living in Poland when that country was invaded in 1939. At the time of the taking over of the eastern border by the Red Army she was out in the country, resting and recovering her poise after the shattering experience of her husband's death. Her husband was Wacław Kochanski, of the Warsaw Conservatory of Music, a world renowned violinist.

The first few months of the Red occupation Madame Kochanska spent in Lwów (Mrs. Mowrer calls it Lemberg, I do not know why). It was a "horrible caricature" of a winter, with Lwów growing daily uglier and dirtier as the intruders from the east got greater and greater control. Then in the spring of 1940, Madame Kochanska found herself suddenly—and unnecessarily, for she was an American citizen—gathered up by the Russian police and imprisoned in a railroad car, along with a band of cultured, well-to-do Jews of Lwów, for exile to Siberia.

There is the raw material of a great book in *Arrest and Exile*, for Madame Kochanska was a sen-

sitive observer and she has remembered everything. It is rather a pity she did not tell her own experiences herself. That she could not do it now is understandable, but she could have laid her memories away to ripen, and then, years from now, have told her story slowly, savoring its full terror and pity. Then we should have had from her a book worthy of the experiences she endured with such fortitude and remembered with such photographic precision. As the story stands now, it is told vividly, but somehow—trivially.

ARTHUR PRUDDEN COLEMAN

Columbia University

*Novyi Zhurnal* [The New Review, a Russian Quarterly].  
Vol. I, No. 1, New York, 1942.

*The Slavonic Year Book*, (American Series, I), published for a Committee of American Scholars by the George Banta Publishing Company, Menasha, Wisconsin, 1941.

For nearly a quarter of a century Paris was the intellectual center of Russian exiles. It was in this capital, dear to the hearts of every civilized European, that the best-known Russian pre-revolutionary writers and thinkers wrote and published in their native tongue. Since the fall of France, the center of Russian creative activity and the last refuge of Russian free thought has shifted to the United States. The appearance in New York of the *Novyi Zhurnal*, is perhaps the best evidence of this significant migration.

The New Review is in many ways a transplanting of the *Sovremennyya Zapiski* (Contemporary An-

nals) — a distinguished Russian quarterly published for two decades in Paris. It is edited by the eminent Russian historical novelist and essayist, Mark Aldanov, assisted by M. Zetlin. Both editors as well as the majority of the contributors to this issue were associated, at one time or another, with the Paris quarterly; nearly all are well-known names in the left wing political and literary world of pre-bolshevik Russia. Fate has recently made many of them exiles for the second time.

In a foreword to the first issue, the editors of the *Novyi Zhurnal* welcome contributions from people of divergent viewpoints, Nazi and Communist sympathizers excepted. They wish wholeheartedly for a Russian victory, yet they do not propose "to be silent about the past and present crimes and mistakes of the Soviet Government." At the same time, the editors appeal to the Russian intellectuals to forget their old political quarrels and to unite now in a common effort to help Russia and the Russian people in their present struggle.

In size (400 pages) and content the new quarterly is impressively substantial. In the section devoted to fiction one is particularly pleased to find two heretofore unpublished stories by I. A. Bunin; the opening chapter of a novel depicting the life of Russian émigrés in the United States by a novice in the field of Russian belles lettres, Countess Alexandra Tolstoy; a Joycean story by V. V. Nabokov-Sirin; and two "political" stories by Mark Aldanov. One of these, is an imaginary exposé of a Nazi Field Marshal's thoughts and feelings; another, based on an actual episode

described by Jan Valtin, depicts a poisoning of a Gestapo agent by a Greta Garbo-like beauty on the payroll of the G.P.U. Both stories are absorbingly interesting and are done with the author's usual deftness in handling historical material.

Almost half the issue consists of articles dealing with the Soviet-German war and the social and political problems confronting the world of today. Exceptionally brilliant are two articles (by G. P. Fedotov and S. L. Polyakov-Litovtsev) discussing the new anti-semitism and the possible solution of the Jewish problem. The high moral tone and the expository gifts of both authors make these articles outstanding contributions to contemporary discussions of the subject. Ably written is the article dealing with the Soviet-German war by A. F. Kerensky, in which the ex-premier postulates the final victory of the Red Armies on the condition that immediate reforms towards a greater liberalization of the Soviet dictatorship take place. Also interesting and competent are other articles devoted to such topics as the foreign policy of Moscow, the Comintern and the war, an analysis of post-war European reconstruction, the crisis of the Socialist movement, and a penetrating analysis by Mark Aldanov of the circumstances leading to Trotsky's assassination.

Finally, the volume includes a few poems by Russians residing in New York, book reviews, a necrology, and a brief account of the whereabouts of the Russian scientists and men of letters since the fall of France.

There are few periodicals today, in any language, which combine



such varied talents as are represented in the pages of the *Novyi Zhurnal*. The emphasis on contemporary politics at the expense of broader philosophical and cultural topics is unfortunate; but the editors are aware of this shortcoming and are promising to correct it in subsequent issues. The *Novyi Zhurnal* is, in any case, a landmark in the annals of Russian emigration.

Since the outbreak of the Second World War, the United States has not only become the center of the Russian *belles lettres* (as evidenced by the *Novyi Zhurnal*), but is also becoming pre-eminent in the field of Slavonic scholarship. The latter is well illustrated by the appearance of the *Slavonic Year-Book* for 1941. This learned journal is a continuation of *The Slavonic and East European Review* which for a number of years appeared in London. Last year this Review was taken over for an indefinite period of time by a committee of American scholars. The editorial committee includes a number of prominent American scholars, with Professor S. H. Cross of Harvard University as the managing editor. The editors announce that in 1942, the Review will be published semi-annually.

It is regrettable that limitations of space prevent giving Volume I of the *Slavonic Year-Book* a review commensurate with its importance. The present volume consists of over 400 pages of varied material, divided between history, literature, and philology of Russia, Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Yugoslavia respectively. About one-half

of the articles deal with Russian subjects, namely: "L. N. Tolstoy: A Cadet in the Caucasus" by E. J. Simmons; "The Influence of Turgenyev on Henry James" by Daniel Lerner; "Russian Poetic Trends on the Eve of and the Morning After 1917" by Alexander Kaun; "The Bolsheviks and the Founding of the Third International" by Olga Hess Gankin; "The Allies and the Supreme Administration of the Northern Region, August 2-October 7, 1918" by L. I. Strakhovsky; "Language and Education in the Soviet Ukraine" by H. R. Weinstein; "The Status of the Russian Church During the First Half-Century Following Vladimir's Conversion" by George Vernadsky; "Notes on Soviet Literary Criticism" by S. H. Cross; "Recent Publications on L. N. Tolstoi" by E. J. Simmons; and "Saltykov and the Russian Squire" by Wacław Lednicki (the last two are "review articles").

The mere enumeration of these contributions indicates the broad range of interests covered, while the names of the contributors are a guarantee of their substantial quality. The competently written reviews deal with some thirty-five books of equal variety; in addition, there are several necrologies of Polish writers and scholars, some of whom have reportedly died in German concentration camps. All those who are interested in Slavonic studies will welcome the appearance of this publication in America.

DIMITRI VON MOHRENSCHILDT

New York City

OKUN', S. B. *Rossiisko-Amerikanskaya Kompaniya* [The Russian-American Company]. Edited by B. D. Grekov. Moscow-Leningrad, 1939. 260 pp.

The story of the Russian-American Company constitutes a fascinating chapter in the history of both Russia and the United States. It is an account of human daring, a scheme of broad design for national glory and individual gain; it is a pioneering venture which, though failing in its purpose, nevertheless occupies a respectable place in the annals of the past. An adequate account of this venture has always been wanted, but because the materials were divided between two national depositories, Russia and the United States, the task of studying them was not easy. Besides, the nature of the materials preserved in Russia was never too clear, even though the late Professor Frank A. Golder, succeeded in compiling an adequate bibliography (*Guide to Materials for American History in Russian Archives*. Washington, D. C., Carnegie Institution, 1917-1937. 2 vols.). Tikhmenev's attempt to narrate the story of the Russian-American Company expressed itself in an impressive two-volume work, but his account was that of a representative of the Company rather than an objective picture drawn by a student of history (Tikhmenev, P. *Istoricheskoe obozrenie obrazovaniya Rossiisko-Amerikanskoi Kompanii i deistvii eya do nastoyashchego vremeni*. St. Petersburg, 1861-1863. 2 vols.). Moreover, the work is in Russian, and the publication is today a bibliographical rarity, having appeared some eighty years ago. Scattered material in English historical liter-

ature displays not only a lack of sufficient knowledge of the Russian language but the necessity for gathering all materials pertaining to the subject, which at present are widely scattered even in this country, in Alaska, Washington, D. C., Berkeley, California (Bancroft Library) and probably in the States of Washington and Oregon.

Here we have for the first time an earnest endeavor to bring together an account based on the documents preserved in Russia, and it must be stated outright, an undertaking achieved with considerable success. The author, S. B. Okun', has evidently invested an enormous amount of time and labor, has thoroughly familiarized himself with the archival material pertaining to the subject, so little known to the American student, and has produced a well-balanced and readable account. Frequent references are made to such valuable depositories as the archives of the Imperial Council, the Ruling Senate, the Holy Synod, the Ministries of the Marine, Finance, Commerce and Industry, and others, most of which are at present gathered in the Moscow and Leningrad State Archives. The author is evidently familiar with the historical literature of the United States, as his numerous quotations and references sufficiently prove. There are surprisingly few, hardly any, references to Marx, Lenin, and Stalin.

The author's approach is broad and his conclusions are sound. He admirably traces the story, beginning with the early commercial entrepreneurs (*Promyshlenniki*) and leads the account to the very end—the sale and liquidation of the entire undertaking of Russia's enter-

prise in the New World. The interpretation given as to the reasons for the conditions preceding the departure of Russians from America is original and hardly to be challenged, since the author bases his conclusions on much new and authentic evidence. Two separate chapters on the conditions of the Russian settlers in America (chapters IV and VIII) are, to the reviewer at least, of special interest, and the subject deserves further study from the American side. Another subject of interest is the deterioration of the Company from a private into a semi-state enterprise, a process largely aided by the Company's chronic financial plight.

It may be pointed out that though frequently the activities of the Company are referred to as "imperialistic," there is not a shade of doubt, after one reads this book, that the term is unjustified. Throughout this book one finds abundant evidence that the official attitude toward establishing imperial outposts in the New World,

including the Hawaiian Islands, under the protection of the Russian Eagle, as some individuals had dreamed (for instance, Zavalishin, Scheffer), was only an illusion which found little support among the official circles on the Neva. Various motives were involved in supporting the Russian-American Company, but the reviewer was unable to find any that could really be labelled as "imperialistic." The Monroe Doctrine, therefore, as a weapon against the encroaching Russian bear in the Northwest, given so often in our stereotyped textbooks, represents in reality nothing but a cannon-shot at a sparrow.

It is the reviewer's sincere hope that the book may be translated into English and made available to a wider reading circle in America than merely those few who possess a knowledge of the Russian language.

ANATOLE G. MAZOUR

*University of Nevada*

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BY NIKANDER STRELSKY

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\*Although not exhaustive, it is hoped that these bibliographies may prove useful to students of Russian history, literature, politics, and economics.

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